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ABSTRACT

A series of articles is presented to provide information and orientation for new community college trustees and for those new to the Association of Community College Trustees. First, Victor H. Driscoll presents advice on the basic tools of boardsmanship. Next, Robert B. Prescott discusses the roles of the board of trustees, the board chairman, and the superintendent/president. After Sandra L. Hasting examines methods of evaluating boards of trustees, James E. Seitz looks at ways of objectively evaluating college presidents. Next, J. A. Catalano suggests that boards and presidents can work together more effectively through an understanding of their respective roles. Following Malcolm Pennypacker's article on the role of the board chairperson, trustee liability and legal problems are discussed by Alton L. Davies. C. R. Ward then outlines trends and projections regarding institutional commitment to affirmative action in the 1980s. Fred Mathews presents ideas for understanding, reporting and monitoring community college finances. Next, Merle R. Donica presents information on community college foundations. In the final three articles, Esther Tang presents techniques for increasing student recruitment and retention, Barbara Roberts discusses the power and politics of state education policy, and Anne M. McKinnon outlines methods by which trustees can keep current regarding community educational needs. (HB)

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Selected Readings from the TRUSTEE QUARTERLY

A special publication—

— for new trustees

— for experienced trustees new to ACCT

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ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES

VC 830 174

SELECTED READINGS FROM THE TRUSTEE QUARTERLY

A special publication for new trustees
and for experienced trustees new to ACCT.

February, 1982

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Basic Tools of Boardsmanship

Victor H. Driscoll
Chairman, Board of Trustees
Wharton County Junior College
Wharton, Texas

To give you some background information, I am Chairman of the Board of an eight member elected board serving a 31-year old college with an enrollment of 2,150. Our course offering represents an extensive vo-tech and a full two-year academic program. Our academic program meets current standards of university acceptance and embraces a broad range of two-year pre-professional courses in addition to normal liberal arts and sciences associate degree programs.

Our institution has had three presidents and three board chairmen during our 31 years. Board officers are elected every two years. They serve a six year term. I have served as a board member for eleven years and as a board chairman for eight years. The remainder of the board members have served from three to eight years. Our President has been with us for 11 years.

Our Board represents a diversity of professions: two physicians, one attorney, one educator, one agri-business rancher, one pharmacist, one fuel-consignee and one veterinarian. We do not require that they divulge their religion, political preference or ethnic identity. We believe that we have been chosen for our interest in the college, our willingness to serve and our integrity.

We feel that we have a fine working relationship with our President. We survived the "terrible 60's" - we survived a building program - we survived the death of one president, the resignation of another, and the hiring of our third.

How does a board accomplish these and other responsibilities with a minimum of controversy and a maximum of efficiency?

This brings us to the real purpose of this article - defining and explaining "The Basic Tools of Boardsmanship." First, let us take an honest look at our responsibilities as board members and then it should be easier for us to determine what tools are necessary to properly perform these duties.

Our functions are divided into two basic groups:

1. External
2. Internal

Under external, which incidentally defines all those responsibilities that require those extra special tools, we find that we are responsible for representing our constituency and for interpreting socio-educational trends in terms of college policy. Secondly, we are to assist in obtaining funds for the operation and extension of the college, and thirdly, to bear the legal responsibility and authority of all aspects of the college programs.

Internal Functions

1. To be responsible for final determination of college policies.
2. To select the President and a time to appoint board members in the event of an unexpected vacancy.
3. To consider and act upon recommendations of the President in such matters as:
   a. Admission requirements
   b. Granting degrees and certificates
   c. Establishing the amount or cost of tuition and fees within statutory guidelines

This article first appeared in the TRUSTEE QUARTERLY, Vol. 2, No. 2, (Spring 1978) pp. 1-3.

d. Establishing dormitory and cafeteria fees
e. Approving and confirming appointments, condition of service, renumeration, etc. for professional staff and support personnel
f. Approving plans for the development of the college physical plant
g. Adopting the budget and revising it from time to time
h. Establishing the tax rate (levy) for fiscal operation of the college
i. Approving the catalog and other official college documents

Now that we have enumerated the stated duties let us take a look at those things that might be termed "potlash" duties. Those things that make the average trustee become an exceptional trustee. Some of these may seem rather insignificant to you but think about them.

I'm speaking of having a concern for the well being of your President. Take a page from the book, *The Care and Feeding of the College President*. Monitor his vital signs and when you see the pressures of his office affecting his performance adversely, arrange for a break - a vacation - a change of environment.

Since he represents your college to more people than any other single individual help him to be responsive to the community by keeping him informed of events that you feel he would appreciate knowing about, for instance; the death or illness of a friend of the college, a prominent citizen, a government official. Inform him of comments overheard that should have a response whether they be complimentary or derogatory.

Differ with him in any matter that good conscience dictates that you should, but make certain that you do this in good taste and with sound reason. After your discussion, resolve your differences as decent people and present a unity of purpose to your public.

Support your President in his recommendations that are identified as administrative. Remember the cardinal rule is, never meddle in administration and your President will leave the policy making to you.

Be a constructive booster of your college and if you find that you cannot, consider resigning from the board because the chances are multitudinous that it's your fault. Share your feeling about your President and his or her performance, be it acceptable or otherwise, with your fellow board members from time to time. Do not allow your college to suffer for an extended period because of inept administration. Your students and your community expect you to prevent this from occurring.

I want to say a word about, "Responsibility - to Whom?" You were either elected or appointed because either the governor or your constituency thought that you had the necessary qualifications to function as a board member. That is, unless the governor appointed you because of friendship or a large campaign contribution, in which case, God help your College! In my opinion your constituency does not expect you to consult with them on the vast number of decisions you are required to make. They do expect, however, for you to make rational decisions always based on what is best for this college.

I make this statement to illustrate my conviction that if you want to confuse every issue and invite a constituency to keep your board in a constant state of flux, then take every issue to them for their consideration and you will have almost as many opinions as you have constituents. Remember they did not expect to have a computerized robot represent them by casting a percentage vote on every issue. Not every citizen is qualified to make the determinations that you are expected to make.

Think for yourself, use your integrity and vote your conscience. If this does not result

in a pleased public, they will replace you at the next election, but it is not a likely occurrence. To capsulize my answer to - Responsibility - to Whom? - I would say, as a trustee, your responsibility is to the college and all that it represents. If you accept this premise and respond accordingly, you will find that you have served your constituency best by serving the interests of the college first.

Are you the trustee who shies away from the politicial image? If so, I say, pardner, either you have the wrong concept of politics, or you're missing a very basic, essential tool of boardsmanship.

Your abilities to function in the political arena are important not only on the local level but they are a prime adjunct on the state and national scene as well. You have been told this before. Please believe it. You should have or you should be in the process of developing a rapport with your local state representative and senator along with their national counterparts. Remember they look upon you as an elected or appointed representative of the voters of your area. I have never experienced an occasion when they are too busy to listen. Possibly they realize that if you have the "guts" to fight for your cause then you also have the tendency to share your disappointment in your representative or senator's failure to respond to a deserving and legitimate need or request.

A trustee should have some knowledge about fiscal responsibility. If this is your weak area depend on your fellow board members that are more talented in this area. Help your President to keep your college fiscally sound and be willing to work for foundation contributions when needed. Remember you are the people who must justify a tax increase or a bond election when this need arises. Be certain that you are fully informed.

Another intrinsic quality that stands out as a basic tool of boardsmanship is the ability to be decisive. A vacillator is a board liability and these folks do your college a disservice. Think, and having done so, be decisive.

Qualities that rate high on my list of tools that fit into the kit of boardsmanship are the qualities of compassion and concern. You have to care about these people we call students, whether they be 18 or 20 year olds or super seniors. Think about their needs, their cares, and how your institution can accomodate them.

I suppose most of you would agree that a human without ego is indeed a rare bird, however, the point I focus on here is this - if your ego impairs your vision when you should be clearly viewing the day to day problems of your college, then, just maybe, you should think about joining an "ego watchers" group for self-counseling.

In summary I would offer a list of essentials for every board members equipment kit:

1. Interest
2. Concern
3. Compassion
4. Decisiveness
5. Political ability
6. Ego control
7. Perception - know the difference between policy making and administration
8. Integrity
9. Fiscal responsibility

You all have your own very personalized ability or talent to contribute to the formula for a successful board. Offer it freely to your board and enjoy the results of a concert of harmony and productivity when dedicated people work together for the enrichment of the lives of all our citizens.

I have described those attributes that I consider desirable in a board member. In reflecting on them it seems that they add up to a composite of J. P. Morgan, Winston Churchill, George Patton, Abraham Lincoln and Frank Lloyd Wright. Not bad company.

The Role of the Board of Trustees, The Board Chairman and the Superintendent/President

Robert B. Prescott, Board President
Miracosta Community College District
Oceanside, California

College boards of trustees are largely reflections of the personalities of the members, as are the ways in which the Board Chairman and the Superintendent/President operate. For this reason, no two boards operate exactly alike. Little is written on what boards are to do or how they are to do it so most of the material available is a compilation of experience.

The college board of trustees is elected by the voters of the district to oversee the management of the college district for the educational good of the community. Trustees act only as a board — not as individuals. No member may act for the board unless specifically authorized by the board to do so. It is a team function.

What does a board do? Basically, it makes policy. In doing this, the board develops the educational philosophy and sets the goals and objectives to carry out that philosophy. It should also evaluate the methods of achieving those goals and objectives. This is a difficult and imperfect task but there are tools available. The board also establishes educational program priorities. Probably the most important single thing it does is to hire a Superintendent/President to see that its policies are carried out.

It has been said that it is the board's job to keep an eye on the operation of the college but to keep its fingers out of it. Board members can and should ask questions and make suggestions. *If done properly*, it is not meddling in administration. Board members must continually monitor their behavior and actions lest they hinder rather than facilitate institutional productivity.

In order to reach valid decisions, the board needs information in the form of staff input. Here we have a lay board receiving information and recommendations from professionals. Should their recommendations be accepted without question? My answer is "no." You will find varying viewpoints presented by the staff, many of them quite parochial. Everyone tends to protect his turf. The board usually has to consider other factors in addition to those in a recommendation and therefore the information must be weighed and evaluated before a decision is reached. Curriculum is a particularly sticky subject in this regard but it is a dereliction of duty to totally avoid it.

Board members have an obligation to their constituents and the district to give open-minded attention to all matters coming before the board. Those who come to their boards as single issue trustees do their district a disservice and limit their own effectiveness. Many of you are fresh from campaign rhethoric. For you, a word of caution — proceed slowly, it may keep you from getting egg on your face. Besides that, you have several years to keep your campaign promises.

The Chairman of the Board in California is elected every year at the organizational meeting. While many think of the position primarily as the "chair" at board meetings, I assure you there is far more to it than that.

The Chairman represents the college/district on many social and official occasions. The Chairman is the one usually called by the inquiring reporter about a story or problem concerning the district. As

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such, he or she is the district in the eyes of many people.

In what is probably the most important function, the chairman works closely with the Superintendent on many things which are not very visible but which play a large part in the smoothness and efficiency of the board's function. These activities include preparation of the agenda, going over the agenda items and back-up materials with the Superintendent prior to meetings, working out procedural strategy for the meeting, discussing press and media releases, and sometimes serving as an ambassador, mediator, or sounding board between the board and the Superintendent. Many hours can be involved in all this and not all Chairmen do these things, but unless they do, they are nothing more than figureheads serving only as facilitators of the public meetings.

Chairing the board meetings until not long ago involved handling routine items, an occasional big issue, but usually meetings were short, uncomplicated, and held once a month. Not any more. There are many and more complicated issues facing a board than before and many of them attract more heat than light when discussed. Thus, the Chairman is often called upon to reach back for ideas and to exert intestinal fortitude in order to keep a meeting on a balanced course. There is a very delicate line between the true exchange of ideas — and utter chaos. Chairing a meeting in such a manner as to define the issues, to get the various ideas and opinions in the open from all board members and then, at the proper time, to drive to the necessary conclusions and decisions is a difficult task. A good Board Chairman needs these skills.

The Chairman should also serve as a facilitator for the internal operations of the board by talking with individual board members from time to time and making them feel effective and able to maintain their personal integrity.

The Superintendent/President has two primary functions. First, to be in charge of the overall administration of the district and, second, a public relations function by representing and frequently speaking at many local functions and before service clubs.

It is essential that there be a close and effective working relationship between the Superintendent, the Board Chairman and the board. A key element in this is open, direct communication. The board and the Superintendent should decide how this is to be done. My recommendation is that this communication be through the Board Chairman for both ease and effectiveness. This should not preclude any board member communicating directly with the Superintendent, or vice versa, if either feels it is necessary or desirable.

Before any of this communication can take place there must be an atmosphere of mutual trust among all parties. If there is not, it will be replaced by misunderstanding, fighting, and bitterness and thus work to the detriment of the educational process. Mutual trust must be worked at to be accomplished. It is not an event — it is a process.

In most districts the board communicates with the staff through the Superintendent and the staff communicates with the board through the Superintendent. The reason for this is that the Superintendent is responsible for the administration in accordance with board policy and instructions. Every Superintendent has the right to expect the board to deal with him/her as the chief executive officer of the district. Superintendents who practice full information disclosure, who communicate bad as well as good news, who do not trick or surprise the board are likely to have a board/superintendent relationship free of misunderstanding and conflict.

In conclusion, it should be remembered that

the responsibility to the community and to the students for all that does or does not happen within the district lies with the board of trustees. It can and does delegate authority but the responsibility never shifts from the board.

The board is the leadership of the district and how it does its job sets the tone for how the college is run and how the students are taught. A dedicated, hard-working board, operating as a team will find that it is overseeing a college that is meeting the needs of its students and of the community — and that is what community colleges are all about.

Evaluation of the Board of Trustees

Sandra L. Hasting, Trustee
Highland Community College
Freeport, Illinois

Trustees come in a variety of categories We differ in personality, motivation, knowledge, attitude, capability, community stature, background and experiences, and ability to express ourselves. If we are to deal with the task of building boards adequate to helping our colleges reach their aspirations and their potential, we must self-evaluate in order to determine where and how we as a board can be more effective. We must become the most effective board possible in terms of accomplishing the college's objectives.

The board of trustees, as a lay organization, has few legal requirements for election and no formal background requirements for membership. The role of a trustee requires considerable insight and certainly a breadth of knowledge, which is usually acquired through on-the-job training after the election. However, a good board has a collective depth which comes from experience and a variety of backgrounds. Among the characteristics we need, and, perhaps, at the very top of the list, is a commitment to our college and to education.

I think our commitment is strengthened and our *level of performance can improve* when we stop and take an evaluative look at ourselves and the quality of work we are doing. During the time of the Highland self-evaluation the trustees, at least temporarily, felt renewed desire to strengthen our weaknesses and build upon our strengths.

How did Highland Community College get involved in self-evaluation? A few of our board members felt it would be to our advantage to in some way begin to systematically evaluate the performance of the board both as individuals and as a group.

I think we all realized that ignorant good will and a degree of blind faith simply are not adequate to the responsibilities we have to our college and the communities we serve.

Nor did we wish to accept the concept and the political over-simplification, "That a trustee's evaluation was whether they were re-elected or not." The first absurdity in that type of evaluation is the thought that the high purposes of our colleges can be left to political caprice.

Secondly, every three or four years is too long to wait for evaluation even if you agree with this methodology. We have all seen elections when very capable trustees lost to either more or less effective individuals. In the democratic process, the cold reality is that elections are a political evaluation. However, elections are not an effective way to evaluate performance. The election process has too many variables and vulnerability to narrow issues to be the single evaluative technique. When our constituency elects us they put their trust in us that we will provide an educational institution of the highest quality which meets the needs of the community. We can provide this type of institution only if we take an evaluative look at ourselves and the effectiveness of our trusteeship.

Another concept is that of budgeting as an evaluation of a board of trustees. Have any of you recognized the values involved in

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your college mission statement? Have any of you been involved with the development of a mission statement for your college?

If you have gone through the deliberation, challenges, the choice of words, and the search for meaning in devising a mission statement, you recognize that you are considering how to serve many people. The mission statement is a decision to be both responsible and responsive to the needs of society and the individual.

The first step toward meeting the mission statement obligations is a purposeful allocation of resources. There is no clearer reflection of the values and purposes of an institution than a review of its priorities in allocating resources (budgeting). Such purposeful allocation will require a careful analysis of all activities, outputs, and objectives of your college.

The analysis is an activity and therefore a performance by the board. Have you evaluated that performance in terms of planning and cohesiveness among members, or ability to make decisions, or ability to relate resources to values?

Let's look at a definition of evaluation — "Evaluation is the process of determining the value of performance." I am thus discussing the value of performance of boards of trustees.

"Evaluation is the determining of significance or worth of performance of the board by careful appraisal and study." I am discussing methods of evaluation (i.e. appraisal and study).

An evaluation can take many forms:

1. Evaluation of human characteristics.
   Harvard School of Business has determined what they feel are the 14 characteristics of a successful person, which are very applicable to our job as a trustee. They are: job knowledge, judgment, organizing ability, attitude, dependability, creativity, communication, delegation, leadership, personal efficiency, relations with community, professional roles, human relations, and ability to work with others.
2. Measurement against objectives:
   Institutional objectives
   North Central Association Report
3. Measurement against standards:
   State regulations
   National Library Association (number of books/number of students)
   Student/faculty ratios
4. Comparison to other community colleges
5. Trend analysis, annual budgets, enrollment patterns
6. Historical records of your own college:
   citizens' survey
   planning documents
   educational specifications
   master plans

Each of these relate to performance in the concept of educational outcomes and processes. I believe that evaluation is a test of performance when it comes to the process of governance by the board of trustees.

Evaluation is a part of giving direction to the college and meaning to mission statements. Without *planning and evaluation*, a college will find its future determined by the cumulative effect of simply pushing ahead, incrementally, each year the previous year's activities *and* errors.

Output as an evaluation concept of economics is used to analyze the production process. The ambivilence that occurs is that services related to higher education production are not easily subjected to traditional economic analysis. The principal *products or outputs* of our colleges are (1) students — graduates (discovered and trained) and (2) knowledge.

How do we really evaluate or measure the services and intangibles rendered to individuals and societies by doctors,

lawyers, social workers, teachers and ministers? If this qualitative evaluation is elusive, then consider the complexity of evaluating the lay boards of trustees that govern or otherwise give direction to the provision of these professional services.

Assuming that the need for evaluation is obvious; i.e., the future of the services we cause to be provided should not drift in annual increments, then a method to evaluate should be found.

We cannot afford the luxury or convenience of becoming stale — we are moving in a system that changes rapidly and we must change with it as we learn more about it. Evaluation is crucial to learning and to change. In casting about for ways and means of evaluation, our board recognized the need to identify our strengths and weaknesses. We felt this was an essential first step in capitalizing on our collective strengths and going to work on our weaknesses.

Our self-evaluation caused us to realize that our board had certain dominant characteristics. The self-evaluation process will allow other boards to identify their dominant characteristics and to generalize whether their performance is oriented towards:

A. Planning — does your board participate in and are they oriented towards overall institutional planning of missions of the college as well as institutional objectives and policies with an overall futuristic picture of the college in mind?
B. Evaluative — does your board rely on the administration to do the planning while your responsibility is to react to that planning — either negatively or positively?
C. Legislative — is your main thrust that of making rules by which the college is governed?
D. Executive — perhaps your board is primarily interested and involved in administering and managing the college — making decisions that could possibly and should probably be made by your administration.

We hear, periodically, that public confidence in higher education is waning. How easy it is for us to point the finger and put the blame on our administrators, faculty, and staff. But, are we as trustees willing to accept partial responsibility for this? Do we get ourselves elected and feel that once we are elected all we have to do is give our "off the top of our head" opinion once a month at a board meeting and that is the extent of our responsibility?

That is not the extent of our responsibility. Being elected was only the first step in opening the door to allow us to serve our college and community. Now we must continuously learn about the community college system, and how it can best serve our individual community. Self-evaluation is a continuous part of that learning process.

Our evaluation as a board of trustees should include:

1. Evaluation of the *effectiveness* with which we have made *policies* which carry on the goals and objectives of our college.
2. Evaluation also needs to measure the maintenance of the group. Consider the condition or quality of the group maintained as you worked toward that goal. Do we weaken our effectiveness as a board by poor personal relations or ineffective communications?

The method of evaluation which we used was a form which we filled out prior to a board retreat. To make this evaluation effective, it was crucial that each individual spend considerable time in thinking and writing. An evaluation is as good as the desire on the part of the people involved to improve their performance. For those who spent more time and effort, it was more meaningful.

This self-evaluation can be done as an

individual first, and then as a total board. The attitude of the board must be open, experimental and explorative if you are to gain anything from self-evaluation and consequently improve your performance, allowing you to provide the leadership your college needs.

During our group evaluation we did not evaluate individual persons. We evaluated our group — the process by which we came to decisions, as well as the substance of those decisions. At all times the integrity and rights of individuals must be respected. Each trustee must, of course, decide how seriously he will take this evaluation and then act accordingly.

In completing a systematic evaluation we really felt we had nothing to lose and everything to gain. We accomplished several things:

1. Self-assessment, in which we became aware of strengths and weaknesses perhaps overlooked earlier. This evaluation provided us an opportunity to assess our real commitment to our job as a trustee, as well as the individual characteristics which allow us to be more effective. It showed in what areas we needed to seek specific knowledge or plan for certain kinds of growth experiences. Evaluation provides an opportunity for board members to get to know each other better, recognizing the qualities that each has to offer. If we can operate in an atmosphere of congeniality and respect for each other, we will be better able to accomplish our tasks.

2. We improved lines of communication and through discussion we could determine specific ways to improve by critically identifying our strengths and weaknesses.

3. We reinforced the team concept idea. As we worked through an individual and group self-assessment and identified specific ways to improve we found that this process really reinforced a team concept — both with ourselves and with our chief executive. We could readily see that we were not identical — we were weak and strong in different areas, but we could certainly learn from each other. Through constructive "interaction" during our evaluation an opportunity was provided for us to recognize that there is more than one way to think about things, make choices, and understand and accept the results of our decisions. This experience certainly fostered an atmosphere of *self-respect, respect for others, cooperation,* and *awareness* through constructive interaction between persons. Our evaluation was not threatening or disruptive. On the other hand it created clarity and generated support of each other and the institutional objectives.

4. We experienced attitude adjustment. A desired attitude of a trustee would certainly be that of being "future minded." Through our evaluation we learned where we were at that time and where we were going in the future. A self-evaluation *should have* "leading on" qualities. With that in mind let us organize for the future — assess our needs as a board of trustees through a self-evaluation so that we are better equipped to assess the present and future needs of our institutions. The future for a trustee is to provide the greatest possible leadership which will allow our college to reach its greatest potential. Only through a *self-evaluation — a critical introspection* —will our eyes be opened *wide* enough to be able to recognize how we can accomplish this.

5. Another outcome was an agreed-upon periodic review. A formal self-evaluation should be done at least once a year. I have found it advantageous to stop and evaluate myself much more frequently. If evaluation is delayed too long, events and actions become stale or are pushed into the background of other events and the past becomes a very hazy thing to deal with. It is not *easy* to continue to evaluate, to continue to learn more about being an

effective trustee, or to stop and evaluate and see where your potential really lies. Through board self-evaluation, if we can become more unified and committed, we will certainly be able to provide better leadership for a comprehensive community college.

6. Having gone through this procedure we integrated our self-evaluation *as a component of a planning, managment and evaluation process.*

Perhaps it is unfortunate that we have a choice of whether or not to evaluate. Choosing not to evaluate ourselves and our effectiveness is an obvious neglect of accountability to each other, to the college and to our community. By *evaluating* and *discovering* our strengths and weaknesses, the *entire* thrust of the board can be *more* effective. Being a trustee is an awesome responsibility not to be taken lightly. With us lies a profound responsibility of being or becoming educational leaders. Self-evaluation must be an integral part of all this.

You as a trustee are a member of a board which is a member of a team with your chief executive and staff. You have an obligation to be the most qualified trustee you can be. But an even more important obligation is to help build the best possible "team of trustees" to serve your institution and your community.

Your strengths may be another's weaknesses — learn from each other. Let us not just simply survive, but significantly survive as a board of trustees.

Unless we evaluate where we are as trustees and how effectively we are working, we cannot prepare our colleges for the same tomorrow that we expect to prepare our students for.

We trustees, as a group, must not only do something, we must also "be something" — the community college at work at its best.

Evaluating Your President Objectively

James E. Seitz, President
Edison State Community College
Piqua, Ohio

As a trustee, you have been recognized as a person with qualities appropriate for board service in an important institution. You are to be complimented. Your appointment or election to that prestigious office is an honor.

But boardsmanship is not honorary. Much serious business and difficult work must take place, including the evaluation of your president.

For the first time in your life, you may be in a position to employ evaluate, and terminate someone. If it's not your first time for that, probably never before have you held the fate of a chief executive at your discretion. Certainly, you are a rare individual if you have had any prior experience in the evaluation of a president of a college, which, if you don't realize it, presents conditions substantially different from those occurring in business, industrial, and secondary school settings.

Perhaps you feel totally unprepared in this important matter of presidential evaluation. Look about. You may take false comfort in the probability that your colleagues on the board are no better prepared.

How, then, do you proceed? I suggest the first rule of order is never to subject anyone, including your president, to any form of evaluation to which you yourself would not want to submit in similar circumstances. The rule sounds biblical, I'm sure. Be that as it may, I believe it is an extremely important ethic to observe.

Assume You're the President

Try to put yourself in the position of your president. Suppose you are the executive to be evaluated. What process would you prefer? Does it shake your confidence somewhat that you now report at one time to more bosses, the trustees, than you reported to individually throughout all your working years?

Let us assume for this scenario that your board is comprised of seven trustees, and they have these qualifications and characteristics: Two trustees are teachers in local schools. One school represented is unionized — a condition which you are known to reject in principle for educators. One trustee is a former office worker, one practices law, one is a business leader, another a farmer, and the seventh member a medical doctor.

As to other descriptions, one of the trustees is a disgruntled, would-be politician who has been defeated for every office sought but this one. Only two of your board members had ever before served on a public board of any kind. The two trustees newest to the board have served only three months each. One of the more experienced members seldom attends board meetings, and he often opposes your recommendations when he does attend. Two members had previously applied for employment at your college, which you denied to them because of their inferior backgrounds. Another member, now chairman of the board, at one time publicly opposed the passing of a needed tax levy for your community college.

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To make matters even more interesting, the board is predominately of one political party, and the original board which hired you was of the opposite political persuasion, almost to the man. And, yes, you strongly suspect that the lone member continuing from the original board had opposed your appointment at the outset.

Nevertheless, you are confident about the excellent progress achieved by the college under your leadership. The record, you believe, will substantiate that. But your success has been marred somewhat. The general studies faculty recently lodged a bitter complaint against you in the public press for, as they put it, "ignoring" their input on a policy recommendation. The allegation evidently impressed some board members, for one conducted a "truth-finding" investigation. Actually, he visited in offices on campus behind closed doors, excluding yours. Since that time, you have had much difficulty trying to maintain the level of board support you previously enjoyed when presenting proposals.

(At this point, I offer a disclaimer: Any similarity of this contrived illustration to your situation or to mine, past or present, is purely coincidental and probably due to the broad commonality of occurrence of the incidents and conditions portrayed.)

The stage is set. Your contract is up for renewal or reconsideration, and an evaluation is to be conducted for that purpose. What form of evaluation would you want in the situation described? Your future, your family's future, and to an extent the future of the college may very well depend on it.

Avoid Subjectivity

In the situation given, or in any other for that matter, it is imperative for the president to receive an objective evaluation. The use of any rating method which largely depends on subjective judgments may be most unfair. Such methods are inherently open not only to the desired sound judgments of people but also to their uninformed opinions, questionable motives, aberrant whims, prejudices, and hearsay.

Trustees, of course, have a conscionable duty to be fair, but unfailing fairness cannot be considered one of man's universal qualities. While most people intend to be fair, the subjective approach typically places them in a position of responding to conditions for which they do not have all the facts for making judgments fairly.

Subjective rating methods of evaluation remain quite popular. Much of the popularity seems to stem from the ease with which rating scales can be administered and scored, as well as the limited effort needed by the rater in recording his perceptions. Therein lies an important weakness. The reliability of the rater's perceptions becomes as much a valid concern as the score received by the person evaluated. The propensity of an observer to perceive a subject differently at times, and according to circumstances which are unrelated to and independent of the subject perceived, is a phenomenon well documented. One's own background of experiences can make a considerable difference in the recording of perceptions, to say nothing of the relevance or ambiguity of the statements sometimes included in rating instruments.

A variety of different methods and techniques of evaluation are in use today. The personal traits rating procedures already mentioned, social characteristics check lists, descriptive essay forms, critical incidents records, and structured group or individual interview techniques are some of the common ones. They are mostly representative of evaluation at its subjective best. The team evaluation method has much merit, but the difficulty is to engage a completely impartial team of experts who can apply it knowledgeably to a presidential evaluation, at least at moderate cost.

In addition to the problems previously cited,

a major concern with the procedures commonly used is that many are narrowly based on human relations criteria with provisions for evaluation by subordinates. The acceptance of the social or human relations approach is partly the result of some educational theorists having advanced their ideas about the evaluation process without having been in a position of managerial responsibility to know what emphasis is important. *Getting along with everyone* and *being liked* have gained more importance in some quarters than attaining institutional progress and organizational quality — the primary matters for which the chief executive is responsible.

A Compelling Syllogism

Some theorists espouse a compelling syllogism. It goes this way: Administration is a social function; college presidents are administrators; therefore, college presidents must be appraised in terms of their social interaction.

The shortcoming of that reasoning has been sadly demonstrated by a college president who did all possible to compensate faculty at the highest level because, he rationalized, "a well-paid faculty is a happy faculty." The strong support of faculty and staff was evidence of the way this president implemented (and overextended) his philosophy. His trustees also thought they had a gem of a leader, considering the obviously good rapport he had established. All went along beautifully for several years, and he consistently received high marks from his subordinates on leadership ability, that is, until one year when the accumulated effect of his folly left the college's budget hundreds of thousands of dollars in the red, with nothing in reserve to pay the bill. Undoubtedly, this president's popularity quickly declined. Not only he but many other employees lost their jobs. The irony of the situation was that this president's unnoticed and unattended poor management skills perpetrated one of the dirtiest human relations tricks of all — the unnecessary loss of jobs and employment.

Several points may be drawn from this true case: (1) There is much more to administration than just concern about social interaction, (2) subordinate evaluations may not truly reflect the chief executive's administrative and managerial abilities or worth, (3) a board would be advised to tie presidential evaluation to presidential responsibilities rather than to a system which harbors elements of a popularity contest, and (4) the evaluation should serve not only to identify executive strengths and weaknesses but also as a basis for correcting troublesome areas.

The Subordinate Perception Syndrome

Many of the executive's responsible actions and important activities simply are not visible within the college community. Those entrapped in the subordinate perception syndrome would do well to recognize that fact.

Faculty and staff are ordinarily too far removed from the inter-workings of the president's office to have more than an iota of a notion as to how effective the leadership is with the legislature, the many governmental bureaucracies, and the board of trustees. Neither can they know the alternative choices available and the lengthy behind-the-scenes foundation work on which progressive leadership, long-range planning, and future developments depend. They can only offer perceptions, and probably very poor ones at that.

Besides, it seems to be the great American Pastime to concentrate on telling the other fellow, after the fact, where he was wrong. Public officials everywhere can attest to that.

If trustees insist on having their president rated by his subordinates (anonymously, of course), then they should be willing to be evaluated the same way. Very likely, if the practice of employee evaluation of boards

became wide spread, there would be many more resignations among trustees than now occurs. That result may be good in some instances, but in the long run I think it would be detrimental to leadership effectiveness. Some trustees already react too sensitively to the attitudes of faculty and staff toward them. Trustees should not be emotionally influenced in their judgments.

The executive officer must also be free from coercive or subtle pressures to please. His personal traits may be perceived to be above reproach, and the process of working with subordinates may be viewed as eminently performed, yet both may occur in a way dysfunctional to the organization.

The classic example is the executive who, for the sake of harmony and popular support, fails to hold subordinates strictly accountable. Perhaps he does not even require written job descriptions, but most assuredly he never dismisses anyone no matter how incompetent some may be. He will virtually sacrifice the vitality and quality of the institution in order to avoid the controversy sometimes attendant to waking up a lethargic crew. What this portrays is a pathetic situation, the likes of which have been allowed to continue all too often in education. The use of evaluations by subordinates can serve to perpetuate such conditions.

The consumer theory of evaluation, like the subordinate theory, has been proposed as a means of performance evaluation. It, too, has severe limitations. Imagine how students would rate their administrators who had recommended dismissal for conduct of a very popular student leader or the banishment of the widely-supported student paper for promulgating lewdness and obscenities. The perceptions would probably be no more favorable or valid at that time than would the rating of a president by faculty where the adversarial atmosphere of collective bargaining is fomenting. None but the most naive persons would expect a consistently unbiased, reliable evaluation from such sources. Neither will informed boards solicit or accept appraisals from such sources, even when foisted upon them.

Insist on Objectivity

Trustees, also, must avoid the vagaries of evaluation by perception on their part. Results, not feelings, not perceptions of human interaction, social traits, or leadership style, are the basis for measuring institutional progress and executive effectiveness. The responsibility shared with the board relative to attaining the institution's mission and goals becomes the proper area for executive appraisal.

A college president, as with other employees, should be given an evaluation based systematically and objectively on performance and results achieved according to predefined duties. If necessary, he should *insist* on an objective performance evaluation. The president who would be denied the privilege might do one of two things: (1) resign or (2) ask the trustees to resign, while recognizing that invoking the second option would be tantamount to doing the first.

The evaluation of a college president is serious business, of course, but boards evidently too often have evaluated no more carefully than does the man in the street. Some have been satisfied to give off-the-cuff, gut-level, or hunch assessments. Others have been known to undertake no real evaluation at all until some crisis occurred on campus, at which time the president was called on the carpet. Investigation and clandestine evaluation have also been substituted for systematic evaluation and firm support at the first sign of a power play against the president. The reported occurrences of that nature are unfortunately extensive, and their handling extensively unfortunate.

The college president who today fails to

insist that a formal, objective evaluation procedure be implemented is flirting with catastrophe. The general absence of a carefully designed, reliable system of review which sets out board expectations and provides for executive improvement in needed areas, probably more than anything else, has been the underlying cause of the high rate of turnover among chief executive officers in colleges. Apparently few boards have been educated to the need and to the procedure for evaluating more effectively.

Executive Needs

The chief executive needs a comprehensive evaluation plan to work by if he is to be free from constraints of the uncertain, have peace of mind necessary for best productivity and leadership, appreciate all the board considers to be important, be given credit for strengths as well as shortcomings, and know in what areas to direct conscientious effort for achieving progress and self-improvement. The plan should be endorsed by the full board. It is one of the executive's greatest needs.

For the sake of institutional progress, a president needs a board which has confidence in him and a board in which he has confidence. He cannot work effectively otherwise.

One of the best means of developing a sound board-president relationship is a written document specifying the details of *everything* to be considered by the board in assessing the president's performance. Properly done, both parties build confidence and respect each other. The document becomes, in effect, a contract of understanding which each party has an obligation to follow. The president knows exactly what is expected of him, as there is no leeway for suprises, and the board can see results measured against specific expectations and standards. Moreover, the written document provides for continuity of expectations, which is particularly important for the president at times of turnover and replacement in the board's membership.

The community college president needs trustees who understand the unique leadership role he must fill and who will evaluate in that light. Countervailing pressures represented by faculty, staff, students, community groups — and, yes, trustees — continually impinge upon and affect the executive's performance and decisions. Thus a president must be a risk-taker who has courage to act alone, if need be. (As the caption read to a picture which James B. Conant, former president of Harvard, kept in his office: "Behold the turtle: He makes progress *only* with his neck out.") Trustees must understand the nature, the subtleties, of the executive's position so that when he acts alone they will allow for an occasional mistake and provide the continual backing needed.

A mutually designed, discussed, and reviewed, objective job performance evaluation instrument can do much to foster the necessary understanding of the president's role and responsibilities. It will protect against taking spurious action for a single error, but it will also indicate when gross or repeated mismanagement occurs.

Objective Appraisal

What constitutes an objective appraisal? The president of Seagull Enterprises, writing in *Supervisory Management*, states the first requisite: "The criteria must be based on reliable, valid, observable, measurable elements in the job itself, not on subjective judgments or personal biases on the part of the person doing the appraising."[1] The job description is the foundation. It must exist in terms defining the job's specific responsibilities and levels of authority as agreed to by president and board. Around it are built standards of performance.

Second, the criteria of the appraisal and the standards of performance, more properly

called *standards of expectation*, should be established by board and president mutually. These criteria and standards should be drawn up before the period of work begins on which the evaluation will be based. Both parties then know what is expected from the outset.

Third, it is important to express the criteria and standards in measurable terms as related to results and expected outcomes. The appraisal document should take into account the quantity and quality of the work, the amount of time needed for completions, and give some indication of how the achievement of objectives will lead to improvement over existing conditions.

The fourth element of the system which needs to be stressed is the mutual relationship involved. Both the document and the actual appraisal review should be the cooperative work of board, or board committee, and the chief executive. That practice will do much to develop mutual trust and understanding, the expertise of both will be utilized, and the opportunities for obtaining performance improvement while reducing stress are increased.

The process could begin with the president. Noting each line-item in his position description, he can develop a set of objectives and standards for the evaluation period ahead. (Annual evaluation periods may be used, but a board may prefer to relate the length of period to the contract renewal date, especially if the president is given a multi-year contract.) Some items in the description will have a single objective. Others will have many. The final number may depend on just what he and the board agree to as areas needing emphasis.

By relating the evaluation to the position description, the president will be judged to some extent on institutional results not totally dependent upon his actions alone. That is to be expected. Presidents should be charged with leadership for the progress and viability of the college. Maintaining a balanced budget, increasing enrollment by five percent, or reducing student attrition by ten percent are examples of possible institutional goals on which the president's performance might be partly judged.

On occasion, a trustee will want to include a topic for evaluation in the document which is not stated as a duty in the president's position description. It is then necessary to decide if the topic is an appropriate one for evaluating the president. If it is, some statement of responsibility should be added to his description of duties. Bear in mind: A president needs a complete job description so he will know what he is expected to do, and he needs a complete evaluation document so he will know how well he is expected to do it.

The Instrument

One workable approach to objective evaluation is to set up a document in four columns, as follows:

Column I: Responsibilities
These are statements based precisely on each line-item in the job description.

Column II: Activities
Statements are listed of one or more specific things to be done in relation to each responsibility listed in Column I.

Column III: Desired Performance
For each activity listed in Column II, one or more statements which indicate the level of performance to be achieved for satisfactory performance are given. Each of these statements, insofar as practicable, should be given in measurable, results-oriented, quantifiable terms. Product statements, as opposed to process statements, are preferred.

Column IV: Actual Performance
This column is completed at the time of evaluation. The president will usually have to document the performance achieved and

share the facts with the board.

As an example of how the instrument is developed, consider the item in a president's job description which assigns responsibility for providing administrative leadership. One of the activities for that responsibility, which would be listed in Column II, might be to develop the deans' management skills. A performance standard (Column III) for that activity might read: "The deans will participate annually in four work sessions on Management for Results as conducted by the president." A more results-oriented companion performance standard might read: "By the end of the year, each dean will have completed an acceptable, detailed plan for implementing a management improvement program for the mid-management employees supervised." Note in this example the objectivity, the measurability, and the chances for management improvement by defining a specific leadership activity for the president.

Compare that with this statement: "Inspires subordinates to independent creative work," which is one of the three "subordinate perception" statements on administrative leadership included in a popular rating instrument.[2] Are we to believe every subordinate is capable of independent creative work, can be inspired to it, or will give credit for the inspiration when provided whether or not any *independent* creative work occurs? I leave that statement and its inherent nonsense for your analysis. You can undoubtedly detect other problems with it.

When comparing actual performance with that desired on the objective instrument, the board may want to apply some means of scoring each item. A scale of "1" to "5" might be used for that purpose, with "performance above expectations" at one end of the scale and "does not meet expectations" at the other. In any case, it is advisable to prioritize activities according to their relative importance.

The accountability required in the objective method should be a welcome relief to those who are concerned about the inadequacies of traits scales, the vagaries of subordinate ratings, or the general lack of concern for measuring results factually as in many evaluation instruments. Presidents, particularly, should welcome this approach. Trustees are frequently impressed when they observe the evidence of all that their executive officer has accomplished in a given period.

The method explained certainly requires much more time and effort than the simple check-off opinionnaire approach. For that reason, it will not be favorably received by all presidents and boards. The least receptivity will probably occur among persons afflicted with subanococcygeal plumbism, that is, a disease debilitating to action, sometimes commonly referred to as *lead in the buttocks.*

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1. Williamson, Denny, "A Primer On Performance Appraisals," *Supervisory Management*, AMACOM, (Vol. 24, June 1979), pp. 35-7.

2. Remmers, H.H. and Hobson, R. L., "The Purdue Rating Scale for Administrators and Executives," The Purdue Research Foundation, Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, 1950.

Boards and Presidents - How to Work Together

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Technical and community college boards of trustees and presidents have been seeking the answer to the question of how to work together for many years. The fact that many of our institutions have been very successful attests to the consideration, at least, that some boards and presidents have established a healthy working relationship. I am firmly convinced that unless the trustees and president, the governance/management team, of our institutions find the proper combination of "working together," the college and, more important, the students will suffer severely.

Because the two-year college movement evolved from a combination of higher education and secondary education, our governing structure is somewhat unique - less defined. Partly because the frameworks that govern the two education systems from which we "sprang" were well established, it may have been assumed that new techniques or additional research weren't warranted. In addition, because our institutions are relatively new, we lack the years of experience to draw upon to find solutions to the perplexing problems facing us.

We find ourselves in a rapidly changing and evolving period of our young history. The challenge of change can produce a strong motivating force for better conditions. However, it can also place a tremendous burden on a struggling relationship between board and president.

What are the respective roles of the governance/management team of a two-year community or technical college? Simply stated, the board is charged with the responsibility for making policy and the president and chief administrative officer is charged with the responsibility of operating the college within the guidelines of those policies. That appears straightforward enough - then why all the concern about the success of this "marriage"? The stakes are high and unless we collectively, board and president, do our jobs right, our institutions cannot do "their thing" - turn out qualified and productive men and women.

Even though the board and the president have their respective roles to play, the board, as policy maker, and the president, the administrator, there are times when the line between them is not all that clear, and any president who consistently makes major administrative decisions without seeking advice of the board is sticking his neck unnecessarily in a noose. By the same token, any board that continues to make policy without advice from the president is also courting big trouble.

One of the key responsibilities of the board of trustees is the selection of the president. How well this job is accomplished will have lasting and vital effects on the relationship we are speaking of and, obviously, on the success of the college. So, right at this critical stage, the board has the power and control of its destiny and all those who participate in the life cycle of the institution.

Once the president is selected, and from that time on, the president must know, and so should everyone else, other members of the administration, faculty, and the public,

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that the president has the board's whole and solid support. Again, the way this is done will help set the stage for a trusting relationship - trust being the key to any sound and productive relationship.

The board of trustees and the president are not equals in this relationship; supporters of each other - yes, friends - perhaps, antagonists - at times, but always in the best interests of the institution. The president must receive direction from the board, the "whole" board, and the board must speak in unison, discussing fully any issue, but finally submitting a united decision. A united board is one in which the views of all members are clearly displayed and, even though everyone is not completely convinced on an issue, the vote is *usually* unanimous and the entire board fully supports the issue. Too often boards react instead of act on issues. They approve rather than *give* direction. This can lead to the subjugation of their responsibility and tends to overload the president. While the president must be responsive to the board, there is need at times to educate the board and give them the background necessary for complete understanding of the issues.

Effective communication between the president and the board is mandatory. The president must keep the board fully informed. There is no substitute for complete disclosure between these parties. This is not only done in meetings but through written communications or by phone, for time may be of the essence in a critical situation.

Although the board of trustees relies on the president for information, recommendations, and the implementation of actions, there is a strong inclination to let the president and administration work out all the details to the solution of problems. However, the board must take a strong position when necessary for their first obligation is to the community, and the community has the right to expect a responsive and effectively run institution.

Most boards evolve a friendly relationship with the president through doing things together (usually with their spouses) - going to seminars, workshops, and special events. Doing these things together tends to bring about a better understanding of each other and, in the long run, a better working relationship. However, a word of caution - the trustees must retain a proper perspective as overseers to maintain the full accountability of the president.

An important, and perhaps vital, responsibility of the board is the evaluation and appraisal of the president and itself. Another word of caution - do it *right* or don't do it at all. A good evaluation has many rewards, but by the same token a poor evaluation destroys initiative and creates dissension.

Evaluate the president on the accomplished objectives previously established with the board. If no objectives have been established, an evaluation can be very subjective and unfair. An evaluation should not be a popularity contest. It should be a positive and constructive appraisal of achievement or lack thereof, based on goals jointly agreed to and thoroughly understood. Just as in any working relationship, the individuals have the right to know where they are - their strengths or where improvement should be attempted. In presenting the board's position in this matter, the board acts as "one," preferably communicating through the chairperson, but only after a thorough and private board discussion and agreement on all of the items to be presented.

The board of trustees must also be appraised, and this chore belongs to the board with the president given the opportunity to make his evaluation and comments. The stage must be properly set by the chairperson for a free and uninhibited exchange of ideas.

Goals and objectives are reviewed. As in any appraisal, past performance is exam-

ined to determine what, if anything, must change. The whole theme of the review must be directed toward - "How do we best perform our responsibilities as board members so that our college can perform its function successfully?"

And now let me review those points affecting the governance/management team relationship that I have touched on:

1. Policy making and administration - each doing "its thing" but best accomplished through sharing and counseling with each other.
2. Selection of the president - The board's opportunity to make a major contribution to their future relationship and to the success of the College.
3. The support-trust relationship. The backbone of any effective relationship.
4. Board unanimity of purpose - discuss thoroughly but act as "one."
5. Act not react - give direction not just approval.
6. Full disclosure - a mandatory ingredient.
7. Get to know each other - do things together.
8. Evaluation - a revitalizing and continuing effort that renews the purpose and sets new goals.

Fellow trustees, we must continue to review and "hone" the governance/management team relationship to best serve our respective institutions so that our students and their training can best serve the public.

The Role of the Board Chairperson

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Not all of us can be board chairmen - or should be. Let's face it - some of us have neither the qualifications, nor the inclination, nor happen to be the choice of other trustees on their Board regardless of aptitude or desire. However, trustees being as intelligent as they usually are, it seems unlikely that one with evident ability should be denied that position throughout his tenure. Which brings me to one of the points I should like to touch upon - duration of the term as chairman.

Opinions differ regarding rotation of chairmen - some favor regular rotation among members either annually or bi-annually - the argument being that every member is entitled to the top spot - that continuing the same person year after year places increasing and too great authority in one individual. Admittedly, the board chairman is in a position to influence action by the board and administration, but I contend this is a plus factor. I subscribe to keeping the same chairman as long as he performs as a chairman should and doesn't act unilaterally without proper authority from the board. In my college, the founding chairman retained his position until he voluntarily retired from the board after 9 years. Continuity in working more closely (as a chairman must) with the chief administrative officer can prove to be of very real value to the administrator and the college. A college is also a business - how many successful businesses change board chairman each year of two?

I would hope that many college presidents have as good a working relationship with their board chairman as I believe mine does with me. This is vital, in my opinion. This relationship should be a two way street - each counselling with the other to insure smoother operation within both college and board. Much has been made of the feeling of some presidents that strong boards and board chairmen try to run the college - "keep them weak and uninformed, so they don't cause trouble". I submit that the stronger the president, the more secure he is and the more he welcomea a well informed, active board. Together they can make a great management team - each doing his own thing.

There are many areas in which a chairman is more involved or has greater responsibility than another board member. I would like to touch base with you on a few of them and share my views that may well be different from your experience. Let's take the matter of the agenda - a simple matter perhaps but, very important. This usually is the perogative of a chairman but in our kind of relationship I believe it can be a joint effort. In fact, in large measure, the president is in the best position to formulate the agenda. In my case, that is the general rule though I, as any chairman should, retain the right to add, delete or change. The agenda plots the course of the meeting but doesn't (can't really) give positive indication as to the roughness or smoothness of it.

In any board, there is the possibility that one or more members will feel the urge to deal

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directly with the president on matters of special concern. This might be of their own doing or be prompted by an outside nudging. In my opinion, and one shared by many, trustees should not act unilaterally. A chairman should counsel his board to listen to outside criticism, comments, request, whatever, but to make no commitment. It should be made emphatically clear that the board's spokesman is its chairman, and the college's spokesman, the president, unless the board decides in some special instance that it should be the spokesman. Such instances would include matters relating to legislation or to protect the president from embarrassment in certain situations. There are always external pressures - from the press, local politicians, citizens of every description, even faculty and students - brought to bear on a single trustee in order to secure information, help, or a commitment on a specific matter. Off the cuff statements by individual trustees - depending on the subject matter - could well be disastrous and rise to haunt - not only the loose tongued trustee - but the entire board and college administration. It behooves any board chairman to make clear the inherent dangers in what may seem harmless comments if the subject is a sensitive one. Every board is confronted with sensitive matters and it takes little imagination to see the confusion, misunderstanding, misquoting or quoting out of context, that might well result from multiple spokesmen for the Board.

A different but similar problem would be created if the college president were held accountable to individual trustees. He is responsible to the full board but the chairman is the link between him and the board. Harassment of the President by individual trustees can take various forms and should not be tolerated. The chairman wields the heavy stick whenever it is necessary - that's one of the fringe benefits of being chairman (like shaking several hundred graduate hands at commencement!). I feel it is incumbent on the chairman to be available for counselling with the President as matters of concern regarding the college arise. By the same token, a good president will lean over backwards to keep his chairman informed. Many times this will avoid embarrassment when questions are asked and the chairman is chagrined to find he has no knowledge of the matter. I feel strongly that a chairman should insist on bieng kept informed regarding all substantive matters not with the idea of getting involved - unless it is appropriate for him to do so - but so that he is aware of problems, potential problems, general state of the college - a multitude of things. Many presidents certainly want it to be that way - a two way informed relationship. I am also sure there are other presidesnts who would prefer running the show - so to speak - by themselves. Such a situation can evolve easily in instances of constant turnover of board membership and changing chairmen. I can see nothing but problems and/or trouble developing from such a situation.

My conception of the role of a board chairman at board meetings is to lead by guiding, control firmly and fairly, arbritrate as needed, refrain from active participation but at all times to be in charge. A lot of things can happen at a board meeting to test the chairman. Several might be - the President (unconsciously or perhaps consciously) tries to take over the meeting, board members argue among themselves; a faculty member, an administrator, a student or a citizen becomes argumentative or abusive and generally disruptive of the meeting. In my opinion, situations like these can be most trying for a chairman. The number of persons at the meeting, other than trustees, may be small or large, but the impression given is the same. In the case of the "take over president," the chairman may have no choice but to firmly assert himself as the one in charge. Chances are a quiet aside comment will make the point, and a fuller post meeting discussion would then be in order.

Prior to the advent of the Sunshine Law in New Jersey, the pre-meeting executive session usually afforded all the opportunity necessary for everyone to let their hair down and resolve as much as possible the most controversial issues in an effort to present as united a front as possible in the public meeting. In such a meeting, the chairman can speak freely and influence discussion. Of course, these are exactly the kind of meetings that aroused objections and brought about the new law for open meetings. Personally, I favor open meetings but also believe there should be opportunities for a board to discuss some matters in depth; things other than personnel, real estate, etc. permitted by the law. There are ways this might be done but all are suspect. So - the chairman then faces the prospect of a possible disruptive meeting caused by one or more of his own members. His position then should be to allow full discussion as long as there is no straying from the matter to be resolved. As long as he is fair in his allotment of time for pro and con discussion, he cannot be falted for bringing the matter to a conclusion by calling for a vote or consensus. Most boards - and ours is one - I imagine do vote, particularly on controversial matters even though small boards are not required to do so.

The handling of disruptive elements in the audience should be controlled by confining public comments to a specified time on the agenda. The chairman should field the comments and not permit general interaction on the part of other trustees with persons in the audience. The president or a specific trustee might be designated to respond to a particular question but, in general, I feel it wise to listen, take matters under consideration and resist efforts to secure immediate action by the board. Too often, precipitate action does not represent the best judgment of the trustee, and the interests of all concerned would be served better by a fuller discussion. Matters of extreme urgency would be an exception.

Much is made of rubber stamp boards - boards that do the president's bidding without question - or boards that follow the line of least resistance which is to do whatever the chairman thinks is best. These are not the same situation - in one the president gets whatever he wants - he in effect runs the show. In the other instance, the chairman is the dominating force and becomes almost a one person board. Neither situation is healthy for the college and I, for one could not tolerate either one of them. Being a chairman does not automatically throw a cloak of infallibility over you. More often than not, it seems to me, a chairman acts on the advice and with the consent of his board colleagues. After all, by electing him to his position, it was not their intention to delegate complete and autonomous authority in decision making. He would do well to think twice before making such an assumption.

The scope of a board chairman's activity is not and should not be restricted to conducting board meetings, counselling with the president, shaking hands at graduation, etc. He needs to be available for meeting with community groups, always be ready to espouse the cause of the college in the community. In all probability, it will be important to maintain liaison and good rapport with local political governing bodies (which, as in our case, may be the appointing agency for trustees) but at the same time resisting any political interference in the operation fo the college. He should not hesitate to protect his president from harassment of any sort by politicians or any one else who may try to throw their weight around and seek special favors. There is nothing in a president's contract that says he must do the bidding of politicians or other so-called influential people. His responsiblilty is to the board of trustees. This is not to say that the president

is not at times a logical and persuasive person to contact local or state politicians on specific matters. However, it is a fairly well established fact that elected officials tend to be much more sensitive and responsive to opinions and actions of lay trustees than they are to college administrators.

An area of ever increasing importance in education - and we at the community college level are certainly no exception - is that of negotiations, formally called collective bargaining. This is a subject of its own and I mention it only to express the strong opinion that the role of a board chairman in such matters should be no role at all - at least as far as actual negotiations are concerned. Neither he nor the college president should allow themselves to participate actively. Their role is to establish guidelines and parameters and to keep informed on progress of the negotiating process. Only the board can make a final decision. The president, or any trustee for that matter, by being involved in the negotiations exposes himself to the real possibility of making a commitment that - while not intended as such - will be taken to be the board's decision. Even those chairmen who feel thay have special expertise in such matters should not, for their own protection and the board's, yield to the temptation to get in there and show them how it's done. There certainly are numerous other roles that a board chairman must or can play and few if any of us enact our role the same way. Individual differences in personality and situations dictate otherwise. Nevertheless, I hope that there would always be a spirit of cooperation between a board chairman and his president which will ultimately benefit the college and its students.

Trustee Liability and Legal Problems

Alton L. Davies, President
Kansas City Kansas Community College
Kansas City, Kansas

As trustees, you are in a very unenviable position as far as legal responsibilities and the colleges you represent are concerned. You are ultimately responsible for what happens on your campuses even though you may be there, in person, less than once a month. Although the laws vary from state to state, in actuality, you and your co-trustees are the college.

Your president is your representative who carries out policies developed and/or approved by you as a board. Therefore it is imperative that you work as a team to develop fair, equitable and reasonable policies which lead to an effective operation of your educational delivery system.

I must emphasize something that you have all heard many times but something I'm afraid is often only paid lip service. You are policy makers. You are not administrators. You must not allow yourselves to become involved in the administrative functions of your college. It can cause you and your college unlimited grief. It can result in legal problems beyond belief.

My predecessor used to say "A board hires a president and it fires a president." In truth, the board does just that if it is truly a good board. It hires a president who selects his staff. The staff develops policies which a board may accept, reject or refine. Once that is done, the board evaluates the job the administration does based on how well those policies are carried out.

Now, admittedly, that's a simplification. Board members do much more. They have a multitude of responsibilities often defined by the statutes they operate under, but for purposes of the topic under discussion here, the policy making function and the administration of those policies is central.

How then, when you are seldom involved directly in the day to day operations of your colleges, can you protect yourselves from a multitude of law suits, equal employment opportunity complaints, human rights complaints, etc.? In truth, no one can guarantee you such protection. You must, in fact, expect such events. Unfortunately, it is a sign of the times, and, as a result, we are all terribly vulnerable.

Surely you recognized your vulnerability when you chose to be a trustee. I know that as a president, I had to accept that fact as a part of my job; not a pleasant part, but a very significant part.

It isn't a totally bleak outlook, however. I think I see a time in the not too distant future when the pendulum will swing back to an era of more moderation. But not, however, in the next year or two.

There are things you can do to lessen that vulnerability I spoke of. You can, you should, you must, take precautions, but you must accept the fact that, in all likelihood, you and your college will be involved in some of these legal problems if you aren't already. Such problems are costly in time and money. They are physically draining. They take a toll on your president, and they will take a toll on you.

If I may presume to advise you, from my experiences, there are certain steps you can

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take which may at least alleviate some of the potential for problems.

First, hire an attorney in whom you have collective trust. Ask his or her advice in either developing or revising your operational and hiring policies. Expect the attorney to be current and to keep current on federal and state statutes which pertain to your operation. Accept that advice. If you can't or won't, get a new attorney!

Following your attorney's advice will not assure you of immunity, but at least you will have formed your first line of defense. After all, when you have legal problems, it is your attorney who must defend your position.

Second, once your policies are adopted, allow, no "insist," that your president accept the responsibility for implementing those policies. It is the president, after all, who is on the firing line daily. He will take the initial "heat." Support him. If you can't, once again you have the wrong person in the president's chair. I don't mean to imply that the president deserves your unquestioning support, but he does deserve your support in implementing your adopted policies. Differences in opinion are natural and healthy. An open show of those differences will only weaken both of your positions.

As board members who bear the ultimate legal responsibility for actions by the college, insist on thorough and on-going documentation for all actions which may lead to any legal actions. This would include interviewing and hiring practices, employer/employee grievance actions, performance evaluations, reprimands, student complaints, and, of course termination of employees and student dismissals. There are others.

In most cases, following the steps I've mentioned will provide you with about as much protection as you are ever going to get. They will not protect you absolutely. Nothing will. They will, however, provide you with a basis for the defense of any action taken against you.

Before recounting some of the "horror stories" I'm personally familiar with, let me summarize three areas where you can seek protection. They are Policies, Precedent, and Consistency.

Develop your policies and be consistent in their implementation, and refer to precedent. Often, even though an area may have been overlooked or even unforeseen as a possible area of trouble, see how others have handled the situation or how you or previous board members have handled similar situations in the past. If you have been consistent, if there is a precedent, it will be more difficult to establish that you are being either "capricious" or "arbitrary."

In their actions and statements boards and presidents often find it necessary to qualify their statements or to be deliberately ambigious. Thus we often see or hear words and phrases like "shall be," "maybe," "serious," "habitual," "unbecoming," "expected," or "will be considered." All of these allow for flexibility in action. Unfortunately, they are also open to interpretation.

Let me proceed now to some "horror stories" similar to some you may already have faced. If not, "Be Prepared."

Consider a complaint filed on racial and ethnic grounds by a teacher who was not renewed. This teacher was a first year employee who was caught in a necessary reduction in force. The grounds for the complaint were that the college had "fired" him because he was Chicano.

Despite the fact that of seven instructors released, he was the only minority member in the group, this was the basis of the complaint.

Admittedly, the Civil Rights division in our state had to investigate. What they found

was that this teacher had steadfastly denied his ethnic origins until it suited his purposes, for on all his forms he had scratched through the Mexican-American designation and had written "Caucasian" in red pen over the form.

It took two investigations, one by the federal people who found no basis for his charge, and one by the state who chose to ignore the federal findings to close Chapter I. The state found "probable cause."

During the next five years, the attorney for the college appeared twice in Topeka, and a full day hearing was held in Kansas City. The former board chairman and I had to appear. After one day of testimony, we waited nearly six months before we were found innocent of the charges.

Total cost, excluding my time and the board member's plus countless hours of secretarial help—in excess of $3000.

A postscript to all this: The attorney for the complaintant, an employee of the state, then attempted to appeal his own commission's final decision!

Consider a nursing student who missed six consecutive clinical experiences, refused to attend lectures, was dropped from class and then demanded a hearing before the board.

Despite the fact that the requirements passed out and signed for by the student specifically listed mandatory clinical experiences, and despite the fact that the cooperating hospital refused permission for the student to be on the floor, and despite the fact that the student and her parents had progressed through all levels of the written grievance procedure, the student had her hearing.

All board members, the academic administrators, all nursing faculty members, the student, her parents and two attorneys were present. The result: the student was not allowed to continue in the course for that semester.

The cost: Unknown.

Or, a faculty member who advocates in his classroom the non-payment of federal income taxes because they are unconstitutional.

After a two year investigation, the faculty member is indicted by a Grand Jury, a warrant is issued and he is arrested on campus after his final class of the day.

The board, acting judiciously, suspended him with pay until the case came to trial. At that trial, once again as president, I appeared in court to validate the documents. Result: Guilty on two counts of failure to file taxes, a misdemeanor.

What would a board or an administrator do except terminate?

Enter the union and a due process hearing request resulting in a two-to-one favorable ruling on the part of the board.

Is that the end? No. Still to come is a hearing before the board and a possible lawsuit.

The basis for the union-backed claim is that a misdemeanor does not constitute "a serious crime" as defined in board policies.

Total cost: At least $2000.

How many applications does your institution process in a year's time? Having a screening procedure is mandatory, but it won't protect you against claims to the E.E.O.C.

A sex discrimination charge was filed against our college by a woman Ph.D. because she was not interviewed.

After spending a full day in hearings and having provided the examiner over two hundred pages of documentation, the case

was not conciliated and still is pending one year later.

The candidate was one of approximately thirty who applied for the position. A screening committee of two women and one man selected those to be interviewed. She was not among them. Thus, we discriminated.

Our plan for employee selection has been approved by our attorney, our board and by the federal government. And still we were not safe. Only our documents may yet save us!

One of our most complicated cases developed over the non-renewal of a supplemental contract for a division chairperson.

By precedent, division chairpersons have always served at the discretion of the dean for whom they work. They are granted released time, usually six to eight hours a semester, and they are paid an additional $500.00 per year.

Some 15 months ago, divisions were reorganized and chairpersons were appointed. Two divisions were being combined. The two chairpersons, both women, had a very personal battle going between them. There was open hostility causing dissension throughout the faculty. Therefore neither one was appointed to chair the new division.

Well into the school term, one of the women filed a sex discrimination charge against us because the new chairperson was male. There were now no women serving as chairpersons.

That charge was filed with E.E.O.C. Now, if you have never dealt with E.E.O.C., you don't know what real frustration is!

A series of hearings eventually resulted. The college attorney and I represented the institution. He was not allowed to speak. Only the complaintant and I could talk and present evidence.

Anyway, we won that decision and received a favorable finding which I presented to the board.

Some days later, I received a resignation from the complaintant, and because it was beyond our deadline for resigning, a check with the notation "Buy Contract" was enclosed.

Nearly two weeks later the check was processed. Under terms of our Master Contract, the resignation was effective when I, as president received it. No board action is required.

Thus, we had a simple solution to a difficult and sticky legal problem.

But wait. E.E.O.C. officials in the Regional Office in St. Louis sent out a revised determination saying maybe there was cause after all!

So, a new round of hearings was in the offing except that the teacher had resigned. Now, enter the lawyers.

A law suit was filed against the board because we "fired" this teacher.

It is pending in District Court.

Approximate costs exclusive of time: At least $5000.

Possibly our stickiest and potentially most damaging case involves two nursing faculty members. I know it is our most expensive.

For years we had had personnel problems within our nursing division. In nine years we have had three directors. Each of the three had had trouble with these same two faculty members. Dissension was evident in the program. Faculty members came and went and most said these two were the principle

reason for their leaving.

The situation came to a head when we were visited by our State Board of Nursing. They picked up on the dissension very quickly and one member told us to "get the personnel problem solved or you will not be re-accredited." One team member specifically named these two as the source of discord to five members of our staff. A statement she later denied making! With friends like that, you don't need more enemies.

In fact, we non-renewed the contracts of the two faculty members who then sought help from the union.

A six day, $3500 hearing was held with both sides represented by attorneys. I personally gave almost 200 pages of testimony.

We lost that hearing which is, of course, non binding on a board by a vote of 2-1.

Both sides then presented their arguments to the board of trustees. In this case, the college attorney was advocating the administration's position before the board. Confused? So were we!

The board voted unanimously to reject the majority report and to accept the minority report.

A suit naturally has followed. To date all board members and I have given depositions which ran two days. We are awaiting the next step.

If there was a difficult aspect to any of the cases; and one on which we admittedly are not on as solid ground as I would like, it is in documentation of specific incidents. We have learned from that.

However, dissension is really attitudinal and how does one document attitude? Events which are described as disruptive, even by co-workers, are hard to nail down. They lack specificity. They are open to interpretation.

It is my belief we will eventually win this case. We have yet to lose one, but it won't be easy, and it will be costly. Very costly.

What have I learned from all these experiences? I refer back to my earlier remarks.

1. Have written policies
2. Follow precedent
3. Be consistent

Beyond that, you have only logic and common sense to guide you.

Learn from your mistakes, but don't second guess. Correct your practices and live with your decisions.

Above all, carry a lot of liability insurance!

Institutional Commitment to Affirmative Action in the 80's

C.R. Ward, Trustee
Southeastern Community College
Whiteville, North Carolina

It seems that the decade of the 80's will continue to allow us to place special emphasis on affirmative action for racial minorities, handicapped persons and females. Hopefully, this emphasis will mean that individuals in these groups have equal opportunity, or equal access, to all employment and privileges, including salary, which are available to members of other groups. Sometimes this equal opportunity may simply come as a result of persons involved in a screening process laying aside some prejudices and, sometimes, equal opportunity may come as a result of an institution making special efforts to recruit individuals in the categories noted above.

The time has passed when affirmative action can die a slow death. Even when the consciences of those in authority allow it to die a slow death (and this probably will not happen except in a few rare instances where those in authority are insensitive and inconsiderate), members of special groups must build upon the progress which has been made in the decade of the 70's.

Regarding the prospect of federal neglect of affirmative action; while it is true that change obviously can be legislated, particularly when various penalties are imposed, real change in the areas discussed here will come only through a movement toward the belief that all persons must have equal opportunity and equal rewards for equal responsibility. Perhaps we have made enough progress in the area of affirmative action in recent years that federal neglect, if it exists, is being replaced by a much stronger force—a belief in fair treatment—because each of us deserves fair treatment from the other.

Obviously, my observations are primarily related to activities at Southeastern Community College (SCC), as opposed to all community colleges or institutions of higher education in North Carolina or in the country. However, if the attitudes which I see reflected at Southeastern can be found in other institutions, the continuous revival, as opposed to death of affirmative action, will stay with us.

In one of the opening statements of SCC's plan the following is found: "Promotion and professional growth for all employees is of major concern. As positions become available, we shall proceed carefully to demonstrate that all qualified applicants will be considered for employment or promotion without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age or handicap."

Two general goals guide the institution in carrying out its plan for affirmative action. These goals are: 1) to make a continuous effort to prevent occurrence of discriminatory employment practices and, 2) to establish and maintain employment levels consistent with the availability of qualified persons within relevant recruitment areas. Carrying out the second goal means that whenever possible specific positions within the college are screened on the basis of qualifications which will accommodate individuals within the southeastern area of North Carolina, or areas immediately beyond that. Obviously, there are positions which are regulated by generally accepted educational standards, or standards established by ac-

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creditation agencies. However, there are other positions, particularly some staff positions in areas like financial aid, student records and student activities, which may allow an institution to employ the best qualified person without establishing what may seem to be artificial degree barriers.

This last statement is simply a reminder of another strong trend which will be present in the decade of the 80's. That trend has already begun and should continue to be pushed by those of us concerned in this area. That trend is establishing job criteria which are appropriate to the job to be performed. We have already made progress in this area, but it is very important that artificial or unrelated requirements do not become real barriers to members of groups noted earlier.

The personnel employment procedures of Southeastern Community College are the heart of the approach to affirmative action at our institution. These procedures guarantee that announcements of employment opportunities are made available to a wide range of individuals. It is of special note that the personnel office uses a standard mailing list for all job announcements and that this mailing list includes personnel and graduate school offices of predominately black institutions, as well as newspapers owned by blacks. Sometimes an institution may feel that they are meeting their affirmative action commitments by simply advertising in newspapers such as the *Raleigh News and Observer* or the *Charlotte Observer* with the assumption that these are large, major newspapers which are read state-wide. All of us know that this is not really the truth and that there are individuals who may have access to other publications. It is very important that announcements go into papers which are read by special groups, as well as into the larger state-wide newspapers.

Once applications are received at Southeastern for a specific position, the screening process always involves several individuals. These individuals are selected on the basis of their relationship to the proposed position, but adequate representation of target groups noted above is also a factor in one's serving on such a committee.

Through standardized rating sheets for files, as well as standardized sets of questions and rating sheets for interviews, every effort is made to provide fair and considerate evaluations of applicants for positions. Not only are justifications for the recommendation of particular individuals expected from the screening committee members, but justifications as to why others were not included are also expected. Comments from individuals who have experienced the screening process at Southeastern have been very positive. These individuals have also expressed both surprise and enjoyment, or should I say professional renewal, at the thorough screening and interview process expected of candidates. While this process may seem to be demanding of prospective employees, it also gives them varied opportunities in which to demonstrate their competencies.

We believe that our current approach to employment at Southeastern allows us to hire the most qualified person for the respective position while providing equal employment opportunity and fair treatment to individuals seeking such employment.

There is another area of affirmative action which must be considered as a part of any institution's commitment to this area. We are especially proud of the professional development program at Southeastern Community College and see this program as a way to provide professional growth and development for all individuals. Sometimes such professional development may simply improve a person's skills or competencies or might be related to moving into more responsible positions.

Professional development for affirmative action means an institution must be willing to provide professional development opportunities for personnel on its own campus, as

well as allow those individuals to have release time for professional development off campus. One way to sum up this approach is to simply state that professional development is a legitimate work activity.

In a time when retrenchment is facing each of us, when affirmative action is a constant concern, and when the belief that our task is to help each individual fully reach his/her capabilities, a professional development program takes on greater importance than has been true in the past. Obviously, a professional development system needs to have built-in rewards, whether they are in the form of simply maintaining one's current position, allowing one to qualify for special merit pay raises, or giving one greater access to new employment opportunities.

It is difficult in a short space to really enumerate the daily commitment to affirmative action in a local institution. It is important, however, that we reaffirm, both in our publications and in our behavior, that fair treatment of each other is so important as a way of life that it cannot be adequately described or expressed in a short article such as this, and perhaps not in a legislative act. It must be described and expressed as a belief from our hearts and in the way in which we approach one another in our day-to-day living.

Community College Finances: Understanding, Reporting, Monitoring

Fred Mathews, Chairperson
Board of Trustees
Southwestern Michigan College
Dowagiac, Michigan

FINANCIAL CRISIS: This is the most frequently used headline when educational institutions come under public discussion today. This headline would be more accurate if it read, *Trustees Create Financial Crisis*!

There is often little relationship between 'financial crisis' and the dollars per pupil available to run an institution. To the contrary, the problem colleges are often those who have lived high, spent lavishly, allowed low productivity and inadequate accountability from the top down. I place the blame on trustees because the buck stops there. As trustees we are the ones utlimately responsible for the finances of our institutions.

During the past decade, almost any college could financially survive, even with mediocre management. Financial problems were solved by ever increasing enrollments, more state aid each year, new federal dollars, higher tuition, new and higher tax levies. Politicians, the public and students passively accepted this kind of solution as the crusade for "Quality Education" became synonymous with more and more money.

But no more! The public now realizes that within reason, little relationship exists between "quality education" and the dollars available. The excesses of the sixties and early seventies have brought state governments and the federal government near the breaking point so that these revenue sources are diminishing. Students will no longer pay higher and higher tuition. New millage votes have as much chance of passing at the polls as a snowball in Hades.

However, all is not lost. We can, if we have the will, emerge from the financial crisis of the mid-seventies and end this decade stronger fiscally and stronger educationally than ever before.

Basic to a sound financial condition is the Board of Trustees. Gone are the days when the public can afford to have trustees solely to balance a board racially, ethnically, by sex, by age or any of these artificial criteria. The overriding criteria must be a trustee who can read a balance sheet, who understands finance, who is willing to make the hard, but sound business decisions necessary for a balanced but logical budget. I hasten to add that this criteria does not rule out the minorities, the women, the young, etc. as all these groups do have an excess of qualified people who meet this criteria.

So, first in the process of sound financial planning is for the board to evaluate itself. We must decide if we have the expertise and the will to govern this big business - and it *is* big business.

The board must next evaluate its president to see if the president has the capabilities to carry out sound board policies and objectives consistent with available revenues. The president must evaluate his administrative staff to determine if his staff is in tune with the board's policies and with the president's objectives for carrying out those policies. This hard evaluation, from top to bottom, in an institution will probably result in some significant staff and board changes.

During this revitalization and reorganiza-

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tion, the board must also develop long and short range goals and objectives for the institution. It is hard to determine the cost of a trip without a map showing where you are going.

Let's assume we have gone through the above shake-up and now have a competent board, president, and staff. The board has set broad goals and objectives for the institution. It is now time to develop the budget. If you have the right staff and have developed your policies well, the only involvement of the board in preliminary budget development is to tell the President, "Bring us a balanced budget." It *must* be the President, not the board who now referees all the academic wrestling which goes on inside the institution at budget time. A board involved *at this time* will create chaos.

Once the President has the *balanced* budget ready to present to the board, the board must be ready to scrutinize it carefully. By the way, an operating budget which uses *any* non-recurring income to balance it is really a deficit budget. The use of surpluses, reserves, unusual gifts or grants to balance an operating budget has brought many colleges, two or three years hence, to financial crisis.

To be meaningful, the proposed budget must be extremely detailed. It must be broken down by departments, and must show what was spent last year and what is proposed this year in each category. Only by this comparision will a review by the Board of Trustees be meaningful.

Projected income must be scrutinized carefully. In 1975-76 many colleges developed their budgets based on projected full state funding of the state budget. Many colleges refused to face the reality that declining state revenues would result in cuts from state funds to all units of government, including the community colleges. Blindly optimistic, many boards balanced their budgets on the thin air of projected full state funding when the signals all pointed to the contrary. Those institutions are now in deep trouble.

Once this budget review is completed, (it should be done in a couple of hours if the President has done his job well) the board then adopts the budget. Once adopted, the college President, and administrative staff must have the freedom to spend that budget without undue constraints but must also be expected to live within the budget. Once the budget is adopted, following the procedures and controls outlined above, the board's involvement in expenditures should be nil. A board should not waste its time deciding on which brand of typewriter to buy, make of furniture, etc. Expenditures must, however, be consistent with a sound board purchasing policy.

At least quarterly the board should get a budget analysis from the business office showing the amount budgeted in each category, the amount spent and the balance in each account. This is a document which is valuable to the board and administration and helps prevent overspending in a critical account before the year is over.

We now have the ingredients for a smooth running institution. In my observations of community colleges over the past thirteen years, I have found that almost without exception, a board with the talent and discipline to get its financial house in order will also display the same discipline in other matters so that *true* quality education prevails.

I am convinced that with determination, most institutions with financial problems can, by following these general guidelines, turn financial crisis into financial stability.

Community College Foundations

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Community colleges and technical institutes, probably more than any other educational entities or types of institutions, can find many advantages in the mechanism the college foundation provides.

The mechanics of developing a foundation for a tax-assisted college are not overly difficult. It is important that an institution have a clearly defined set of goals before launching the college foundation concept.

Trustees of the institution must get deeply involved in the immediate and long-range plans of their college for it is the board of trustees who must ultimately make the decision as to whether, in fact, a college foundation will be in the best interest of their institution. Clearly defined goals and objectives for the foundation which have been thought out and approved by the trustees of the college serve to place the governing board in the decision making process and measurement of the outcomes of the foundation. Board follow-up is important.

An institution should then proceed to develop articles of incorporation through the necessary legal channels to assure proper and maximum development of the foundation structure. Once the articles of incorporation have been developed and approved by the state in which the college foundation is being proposed, the document should then be filed with the recorder of the county in which the official administrative office of the college is located.

During the process of developing the structure of the foundation, it may save time and error if a draft copy of the proposed foundation is shared with the Internal Revenue Service, since it will be that federal office which must ultimately determine if the proposed foundation meets the necessary I.R.S. requirements to be declared tax-exempt as a not-for-profit corporation.

When not-for-profit status is granted by the Internal Revenue Service, it is very important that the institution to which the exempt status was granted continue to follow the same plan of operations as stated in the original document for which the classification was based.

If the purpose of the foundation, character, or method of operation is changed, it is important that the institution notify the I.R.S. of such change in order that the effect of the change may be considered as it relates to the approved exempt status.

The college foundation, within the framework of the approved structure, may assume the characteristics of an institution-within-an-institution and therefore, needs to be staffed in such a manner as to provide for flexibility of operation, but attention must be given to the vital concerns of the board of trustees, that being institutional cohesion. In other words, the foundation must operate as an integral part of the total institution and to the benefit of the total institution, not "an island unto itself."

Foundations may be organized and incorporated in different ways and for different purposes when they are originally designed by the institutions. It depends on what the respective institution wishes to accomplish with their foundation.

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It may be that the college wishes to design the foundation to receive and administer gifts, grants, bequests, equipment, contracts and patents which is a common design for educational foundations.

Such a foundation might be organized to promote education, scientific and charitable functions and various other activities.

Additionally, it may foster and encourage education and learning by making gifts, scholarships, grants and student loans. The foundation may be designed to seek, acquire, hold, and use gifts, bequests, devices and endowments for the needs of the college, its faculty, staff and students.

Further, many individuals, corporations, and foundations have policies prohibiting charitable contributions to state-assisted institutions. Those same donors, however, can and will make contributions to public foundations serving these institutions.

A growing number of companies match the employee contributions made to educational institutions. In fact, some firms are now matching on a $2. for $1. or even $3. for $1. basis. The college may want to encourage potential donors to check with their employers or corporations to see if a "matching gifts program" is offered.

At the state level, it may be that an income tax credit law exists which would provide donors with deductions on gross income tax and federal income tax.

One other area which has not been mentioned is the use of the foundation to provide facilities for the college. Depending on the design of the articles of incorporation and scope of approval as a not-for-profit foundation, it may be that the college could benefit from a facilities development program financed by outside sources or even state appropriations and channeled through the foundation as an "arm" of the college.

Such a plan, if approved by the Internal Revenue Service, has a higher degree of flexibility than, in most cases, the traditional channel of seeking direct funding for the college. The, perhaps, most valuable consideration of such a plan is the possibility of a federal income tax exemption by the I.R.S. since the foundation through which the construction funds are being channeled is a not-for-profit foundation and therefore might qualify for the exemption of federal income tax on the construction loan. Such a plan has been implemented by some institutions and proven to be effective.

In most instances, under such a plan, the foundation assumes the financial burden of the facility cost in the form of a loan or mortgage on land owned by the foundation. The loan is secured by the state appropriation or some other guaranteed source which is spread over a designated period of time. During this period of amortization, the foundation is actually leasing the facility to the college it serves as a foundation. When the indebtedness is paid off through, in reality, lease-purchase payment, the facility ownership usually reverts from the foundation to the college.

Community colleges and technical institutes, by design, have the ability to attract potential donors, especially in the areas of occupational education. At the postsecondary level, there exists an established relationship with industry and business, which may be potential sources of funds, equipment, land and buildings.

As we look to the future for community colleges and technical institutes, it is quite apparent that new sources of funds and resources must be found. It will challenge every trustee of an institution of higher education and especially two-year tax-assisted colleges to find new ways to supplement the financial needs of his institution. College foundations are one way of meeting that challenge.

Student Recruitment and Retention

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The concepts of student recruitment and retention have been discussed within community college circles for the past three to five years perhaps as much, or more, than virtually any other topic. This is not surprising, since for the first time in 1976, the nation's community college student population did not experience its previous growth cycle—something which was inevitable, and yet came as a shock to many involved in the community college movement. Admittedly, some systems continued to grow as a direct by-product of the population growth of their particular geographic location. It is my belief that even systems which do not find themselves in areas of general population decline, will need to continue striving to maintain student enrollments. All systems however, have come to the realization that proper recruitment practices are necessary to remain financially solvent, and that once students are attracted to the institution, retention becomes an extremely important factor in long term stability.

Recruitment of students by public institutions once had a very negative image to many educators. On one end of the recruitment spectrum have been the expensive low-key programs reserved for the so-called elite private institutions. These programs have been aimed at the particular clientele served by those institutions.

On the other end of the recruitment spectrum have been the recruitment techniques used by many of the more successful proprietary schools. Here, the Madison Avenue approach has often been used which includes mass mailings, television, radio, and newspaper advertisements, billboards, and other techniques generally employed by "product marketing" specialists. These recruitment techniques may be questionable from *some* individuals' perspective. Since proprietary school enrollments have held their own or grown during the past 10 years, it seems reasonable to assume that these techniques have been effective, and positively contributed to this phenomenon. Recruitment techniques for these schools have always been viewed as necessary for their survival since the concepts of profit and loss take on a meaning to them often ignored in the public sector. Once enrolled in a proprietary school the student is virtually guaranteed a number of factors—a program tailored to his/her needs, a timeframe escalated to provide training for employment as rapidly as possible, and guaranteed job placement upon successful program completion.

Can community colleges utilize some of the concepts which have long been utilized by private and proprietary schools to improve their recruitment and retention capabilities? The answer quite obviously is *yes*. In fact, many of the more successful colleges already are utilizing these techniques. Educational recruitment and retention may be as basic to the achievement of student and institutional goals as the quality of the teaching which occurs in the classroom. Proper recruitment and retention programs will bring about sustained institutional holding power and thus greater financial solvency.

What then are some of the positive techniques which can be used, in varying degrees,

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by institutions?

First—**Retention begins with recruitment**. It is obviously impossible to retain students that are not enrolled. Just as important, however, is that it is difficult to retain students if the wrong ones are enrolled. To increase enrollment only may result in students being recruited more on the basis of headcount, than on institutional commitment to providing quality programs. This can easily occur with particularly disastrous results when recruiting low-income and minority students. A UCLA study on the topic of retention concludes that: "Retention begins with an ethically conducted recruitment program and admission standards based upon research concerning the characteristics of persistors." In other words, recruitment should be aimed at prospective *graduates*, not prospective *freshmen*. It may purely be a matter of institutional ethics to be sure and not recruit students with characteristics dissimilar to those of students who persist in an environment or whose attitudes and goals do not fit the institution. A fit between student and environment may be associated with reduced attrition to an even greater degree than the availability of financial aid according to a 1977 study on this topic in "The College Board Review."

Next—**A high quality educational advisement program leads to increased student retention.** Although virtually every college in the country currently claims to have an advisement program, the amount of human and fiscal resources pledged to such a program undoubtedly vary to a great degree. Sound advisement gives students the best information possible upon which to make wise educational decisions. It would seem quite obvious that students who make good educational choices will then have a greater personal commitment to those choices and hence are retained to a higher degree.

Third—just as student/faculty interaction is important to student performance, **the quality of student/faculty interaction is a major factor to an institution's holding power.** A sustained professional relationship which has been established between a faculty member and a student usually will result in a higher retention rate. Such a relationship can be one of the positive byproducts of the advisement program previously mentioned. It may sound trite, but students who feel that faculty are interested in their success as individuals, rather than merely as statistics, will tend to be retained by the institution.

Fourth—one of the best predictors of student retention are student grades. Although we may all agree that grading systems are not perfect, the literature is filled with research which indicates that students who maintain high grades are those most likely to be retained by the institution. This again would seem to point to a solid advising program in which faculty **review student performance on a systematic periodic basis.**

Fifth—since a strong advising program seems to be so extremely important to recruitment and retention, such a program must be designed to provide accurate, consistent, timely, information to both the student and the advisor. This means that merely designating faculty as advisors is not enough to insure a successful program. **Appropriate support systems to the faculty advisors must be developed** on an institutional basis which assist faculty in working with advisees. It is necessary, therefore, to involve those individuals responsible for support services, such as the computer center director, in discussions with those persons planning an advising system.

Sixth—**training programs should be developed for every group of personnel** within the institution. Each of these training workshops should be oriented to that particular personnel group. One of its goals should be: making everyone associated with the college better acquainted with the programs and services of the institution. Employees can be some of the best recruiters for the institution if they know what the institu-

tion can offer. This is especially true for persons who come into early contact with prospective students, especially those individuals merely visiting the campus to acquire general information. Drawing blanks, offices being closed while people take breaks or on lunch hour are small, yet annoying occurrences to a prospective student who has taken his/her lunch hour or left work a few minutes early to dash by the college to pick up information. Turning students off early may mean turning them off forever!

Seventh—at an institutional level, **develop a college theme and logo** which is consistently used on all brochures, letterheads, etc. The purpose of this is to strengthen the association of the theme and logo in the community's mind with that of the college.

Eighth—**utilize the local TV, radio and newspaper media** to the fullest extent possible. Develop a system to generate public service announcements and news releases on an on-going basis. The media should be compatible to the needs of the area. It is particularly important, however, that the flow of all these items be through a central clearing house. Such a system probably should be under the responsibility of a community relations director who can devote much of his/her time to the establishment of a creditable working relationship with the media.

Ninth—**establish a college-wide recruitment and retention committee** composed of students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Utilize this committee to develop many of the ideas to recruit students into the institution and to retain them once they have been enrolled.

None of these nine steps is new or startling, yet it is amazing how many institutions seemingly ignore the basic concepts. It is important for community college educators to understand that recruitment and retention must go hand in hand, and that recruitment is far more than advertising and promotion. Recruitment at the community college level includes a full understanding of what the market is, that is, populations of people to be served. These markets must be analyzed to see whether or not the institution's programs are meaningful and effective. If programs are not meaningful and effective, institutions must be willing to accept change and phase out less effective programs while developing programs more closely aligned to community needs.

In summary, an effective basic recruitment and retention model may be thought to be condensed into *four* major basic rules:

1. **Recruit ethically:** Recruit students who can benefit from the instructional and service programs of the institution. If a pool of prospective students is found for which the college does not offer appropriate programs and services, be prepared to develop such programs and services *before* the students are enrolled.

2. **Orient honestly:** Inform students of what the institution can and cannot do for them. Help them to set educational and personal goals based on sound information and if these goals do not match with what the college can provide, be prepared to suggest other options. This seeming loss of a student may make a better friend of the college over the long run.

3. **Inform continuously:** Make sure there is a steady, concise, accurate flow of information from the college to the media. Make sure college publications are accurate and that necessary procedures are explained sufficiently. Provide support systems to faculty advisors which assist them in maintaining professional relationships to students.

4. **Advise developmentally:** Insure that an advising system is endorsed at the highest institutional level. Train faculty and counselors through appropriate workshops in advising techniques and make this a portion of their professional duties.

The Power and Politics of State Education Policy

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Member, Oregon House of Representatives

Politics is a characteristic of education at all levels—federal, state and local. I would like to focus on the state level as it interacts with the role of the local board member. I have two reasons for doing that. First, that's the area I understand best and second, I believe state government has a greater effect on community colleges than the federal government. State government affects us more directly and, conversely, is more accessible to us as board members, trustees and administrators. So what I would like to share are some ins and outs, dos and don'ts, on how to impact the state government as a community college board member.

Recognizing there's a great difference among the states in how community colleges are governed, and that there is a difference among state legislatures and their priorities, and that there are even differences in how local board members are selected, I still think there are significant commonalities that relate government at the state level to your colleges and your own potential for impact on the legislative process.

The first thing to note is that the state legislature makes the laws affecting elections. This is especially significant in those states which rely on local property tax and locally elected board members. The conditions and jurisdictions for electing local board members and the dates for elections relating to bonds and budgets and other levies all have a significant influence on the daily life and the annual work cycle of a local board member. These may seem like incidental or minor laws, but when you think about it, they affect student aid, they affect building programs, they affect the whole collective bargaining area, and they define the roles of the different educational segments in each state. The state legislature strongly influences or directs a wide range of policies that decide who we are and what we do in education. The most significant impact they have, of course, is on funding and that's the one most of us feel strongly about and the one that we are influencing least effectively.

Each trustee is either elected or appointed. Both methods are political processes. Our institutions are created and usually funded based on decisions made in the political arena, either through direct elections or legislative actions. We are a public governmental body and we are politicians in the eyes of our local citizens. *We* may not think we are politicians and *we* may not think we are government, but you better believe your local citizens believe you are. *We* all believe that we are public servants, but *we* are "politicians" in the eyes of those who elect us. We are subject to the laws and the bureaucratic rules created by other politicians. So with that *very political* framework in mind, let me discuss lobbying—lobbying in your state legislature for what you need and want.

Many people are even more uncomfortable about the term "lobbyist" than they are about the word "politician." If there's one thing they don't want to be, it's a lobbyist. If there's a second thing they don't want to be it's a politician. But, if we are going to succeed in being strong and viable representatives of community colleges, we have to have both of those things. I used to be a lobbyist (before I went straight and became a

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politician). I was an unpaid lobbyist for emotionally handicapped children for a number of years in Oregon and when people talk about special interest lobbies—well, I did have a special interest, emotionally handicapped children! So I began to perceive that there was a way to make people feel differently about lobbying when they understood that a special interest doesn't necessarily mean a negative interest. When the special interest relates to something important and special to you, something you care about and want to impact, it's quite a different story. So I took on the job of trying to change the image of the lobbyist. I traveled around the state speaking to the Kiwanis, the Junior Chamber of Commerce, the garden club, telling them how wonderful and important lobbyists were, at least from my point of view. I kept getting, "What's a nice girl like you doing in a place like this?" And I'd answer, "I'm doing what needs to be done!"

People's negative feelings about lobbying are brought into particularly sharp focus during the budget process. They fail to realize that the budget process, like other legislative processes, is fundamentally political in nature and not well served unless each party with an interest in the decision states its case as forcefully as possible. Let me give you an example. Let's assume the legislature is trying to decide whether to allocate money for a new jail or a new building on your campus. The district attorneys have been talking to their legislators, the sheriff from a legislator's county has been talking to him (or her). A woman shows up at the legislator's office and says "My daughter was raped by this guy and they couldn't confine him because they didn't have enough jail space." Local judges talk to the legislature. County commissioners begin to talk to the legislature. While all these things are happening, the momentum for the construction of a jail is building and the need for a jail is being emphasized *again and again and again* with forceful, strong arguments. Meanwhile, we as community college board members, send a few letters to our local legislator and that's it. *If we do that!* And then we wonder why they build a jail instead of a building on our campus. Those kinds of trade-offs are a part of the process because there's usually not enough money to do both. The difference is, the jail advocates did their job and we, too often, do *not* do ours.

Your state association can't do it all for you. Not by itself, no matter how strong, how good or how well staffed it is. The reason is that it is not possible for the small staff most of our associations have to have the kind of impact effectively and collectively on legislators that their home town board members can have. *Trustee involvement is the key.* And not *just* when you need a legislator, not *just* when it's time for a vote and they have something you want. You need to start earlier than that and lay the groundwork.

One of the first things you need to do is **know your legislator.** Not just their name and which district they represent and that they are a senator or state representative, but actually know something about the person. What do they do for a living? Do they belong to a lodge? Where did they graduate from college? What state is their wife from? How many kids do they have? There are millions of questions of a friendly nature that can help you come to know and understand that person better. How did they get into the legislature? What's their background? You might feel differently about a person if you know that person was a community college board member 20 years ago in another state or if they are currently on a board of trustees of an institution of higher education or on an elementary and secondary education school board. If you both, for instance, graduated from the same state university, you may have something in common that you can use to begin a working relationship with that person on a more human level.

The second thing is that you must **know the legislative process.** You cannot come down to the legislature the day the vote is happening and be effective. You need to

know how your state legislature works, what is the committee structure, how does a bill move, what are the major decision points, and how does the funding process work. It's not a difficult process, in most cases, but many, many people do not understand it and we, as educators, should know the importance of educating ourselves.

A third idea is to **become involved in legislative campaigns.** This is particularly important since there is usually someone on your board who feels philosophically comfortable with nearly any candidate running for local office. Encourage those people to make contributions of time or money to the candidate of their choice. Many a long-time legislative supporter has been made by a local board member taking time to give a coffee for that candidate. At any rate, the reward during the next legislative session is bound to be better than if you ignore the candidates running in your community. If they lose, so be it. If they win, it's to your direct advantage to know and have better access to the successful candidate.

And the fourth thing is, don't forget the **pride of your local legislators in your campus.** Don't forget the ceremonial times—the dedications of new buildings, the homecoming week. Don't forget the forums you can provide to your state legislator or legislative candidate through workshops and panels. Graduation speeches and all other kinds of things that are going on in your campus give you an opportunity to make that legislator feel at home and closely familiar with the programs and buildings for which you may later want more support. The more they identify with your campus, the more likely you are to have their ear the first time you need them and the more supportive they will feel, I think, of community colleges in general.

Now, let's go back to talking about lobbying. Here are a series of very short simple rules that will help you be effective:

- Know the number of the bill you are discussing.
- In addition to its number, be able to identify its intent—the bill to fund a new building, a bill to change the collective bargaining law. Take time to jot down one short sentence that describes the bill and use both the number and that sentence every time you refer to the bill.
- Be aware of and understand all amendments to the bill. Don't be talking about a bill that has changed so much that the original bill basically no longer exists.
- Know which committee the bill is in and who the committee members are and at what stage of the committee process it is. Keep informed so that you will be talking about the bill in its current form—the legislator should be current and expects the same from you.
- Have examples of how the bill affects you at your local community college. There is no better lobbying technique than to be able to say, "If this bill passes, it will have the following impact on my college, my staff, my administration, my buildings, my program." That makes the legislator identify with it on hometown terms.
- Let your state association know what you are doing. It is important that they be able to coordinate what is happening and use the information that you develop while you are there. If you have already covered a particular base with a local legislator, your executive secretary or executive director is better off working on those that aren't covered. So coordinate your efforts with them. Then you can both be effective and, most importantly, your effort comes off as a coordinated, team effort.

There are really three kinds of lobbying: the telephone, the letter and in person. The distance between your home and the capitol may have something to do with which of these you choose. They all have one thing in common—the length of time that you spend with the legislator is important to that legislator. DO NOT WASTE THE LEGISLATOR'S TIME! It is their most valuable commodity and is especially important to them during the peak moments of the

session. Here are some tips on that.

Follow up. A phone call should always be followed up by a letter. A letter should always be followed up on the phone. Make a phone call to your legislator, give him the bill number and the identifying sentence and tell him what you want. Follow up with a letter saying, "I appreciate the time you spent with me on the phone" and repeat the bill number and the intent and your request for action. The same thing works in reverse. It's good double coverage and you should use it.

Be patient. Recognize that if you make an appointment with a legislator, it's tentative. You may make an appointment a week in advance and find that the day you arrive in the capitol the President of the Senate has scheduled a meeting involving your legislator. Or the exact time of the legislative session may change from day to day and your legislator has no control over those things. Be patient with those kind of things. Many citizens feel that an appointment is to be carved in stone and that the legislator is being discourteous if it is broken. You have to recognize that theirs is a process over which they have less than complete control. Just go to their office and be patient.

Work with staff. The staff person is a key confidante and extension of any legislator. Having been a staff person for the last three sessions of the Oregon legislature, I can tell you that one of the best ways you have of getting your legislator's attention is to work well with their staff. Explain your problem and your bill and your situation. They have the legislator's ear and if you have done a good job, it's almost as good as if you met with the legislator.

Follow up on what you've done. You may see a legislator in February and find that the vote you seek will not happen until April. Follow up in the meantime. A short note or phone call saying "I understand the bill we talked about is coming up next week. I appreciated your time in February and hope you are still with me on that." It's a little thing, but even a postcard is a quick and easy way to let them know that you remember that you talked to them and what they promised they would *try* to do for you.

If the legislator votes with you, don't forget to say thank you. It doesn't take much of your time and legislators appreciate hearing about the things they did right. Too often, they only hear about the things they did wrong. Even if they voted against you, let them know that you appreciated their attention, perhaps saying you are disappointed in their result, but that you look forward to working with them on other things. Even if you don't get such notes written right after the vote, remember to do it when the session is over and the legislator is at home. Those later thank yous are appreciated just as much as the ones that come right after the action. Your note may even get the legislator's attention better when the rush is over.

Most important, remember that if you don't do it, nobody else is going to do it for you. The national and state associations have countless things to do. Each state has a lot of legislators and there is no way that a paid staff can cover all of the bases. But beyond that, you are the ones that are viewed as political figures by your local legislators. Lobbyists have their responsibilities and often have very effective working relationships with legislators. But you, as a political figure and leader in your community, need to recognize that is how you are viewed by your legislator.

You can give to the community college cause an impact that no staff person can have no matter how good a job they are doing. Remember that you are competing for funds with senior citizens, blind children, sheriffs, roads, mental health programs and economic development. They are all doing their job. If we do ours, the competition will be more equal.

Keeping Current in Education/Community Needs: A Trustee's View

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There is a vicious little germ that can invade an organization; it's the "too busy/can't do it" germ. This germ is infectious within an organization, for when a campus dean becomes "too busy/can't do it", it soon spreads to the campus department heads and then to the faculty and then to the service areas of the college. When a college can't respond to an expressed need from a local business for a special training program because *they are too busy* and *they can't do it*, the germ spreads to other parts of the college who are charged with meeting community needs. Before long an infection spreads throughout the college, and the college does become too busy and *can't do it*!

A reason for the "too busy/can't do it" situation is that people within organizations become comfortable and satisfied with activities they have learned to do well. In a community college we may have learned to teach a program so well that teaching the program has become the object as opposed to meeting the need within the community or within the student body for the program. An example might be a college continuing to teach only basic electricity when, obviously, the industry needs people trained in electronics.

Opening new programs in a new college may be far easier than keeping current in an established community college, for with new programs, there's a rush of excitement with involvement of the community, advisory committees, visiting other facilities, interviewing and hiring new faculty, recruiting and selecting students, and other enthusiastic activities surrounding the beginning of something new. Whereas, in an established college with operating programs it may have become hard to get a quorum of business people to come to a program advisory committee meeting, the equipment may have become old and outdated, and yes, even, reservations may exist about the judgment that was used in the hiring of some of the faculty members a few years ago.

The question then becomes, from the perspective of a trustee, "How can a college stay current in terms of educational and community needs?" First, some words about philosophy and commitment need to be said. Secondly, methods of keeping current need to be discussed. And finally, some challenges need to be made.

There must be a commitment to currency. A general prevailing philosophy needs to exist, that the community college will serve its changing community, meet its educational and community needs. The commitment and philosophy become a set of attitudes. The attitudes are sensitivity, awareness, responsiveness, and flexibility.

Sensitivity refers to a caring and knowing feeling in the college as to what is happening in the community and a concern for what is happening. The focal point is the community, not the college.

Awareness is a knowledge base that the institution builds about the community. The

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data may come informally or formally, but the college is committed to being aware of needs and changes in the community.

Responsiveness is putting feet to the commitment. It's an attitude of not only the college staying sensitive and aware but willing to make a response.

Flexibility is a feeling that the college programs and structures are not so rigid that they can't change to meet changing community needs.

These attitudes held by trustees and staff alike become catalysts for staff renewal and for curriculum viability. With the commitment to responsiveness, a program and its personnel must stay current in its field and must be ready to respond to different needs. Curriculum viability means that there must be processes to insure that the programs of the college are indeed meeting community needs that are current, and that are not simply tradition.

In summary, a community college must "keep current" if it is to be responsive to its community.

Methods of Keeping Current

We may have a burning desire and commitment for currency, but burning and desiring can't make us current. Just what are some processes that can keep the college current and responsive to community needs? Trustees have an interesting position in the "keeping current activity", for they are both part of the process as well as governors of the process. So, let's think both of the role of the trustee as well as the role of the individual staff member in the activity.

First and foremost, a trustee must support and encourage its president to be involved in the community and aware of its needs and issues. The president should feel the support and the direction of the board as he works in the community and provides leadership to an institution that might all too readily become "too busy/can't do it."

Civic involvement by individual trustees and the college staff is an absolute must. Imagine how many community needs and issues and civic positions are formulated at Rotary, Kiwanis, Sertoma, Junior League, and other voluntary organizations within the community. College staff members should be a part of these civic associations, representing the institution and offering college resources to meet community needs. There should also exist within the college a way of processing information that ensures that current community needs are heard by appropriate college decision-makers. Administrative and staff involvement in civic organizations is so important in my estimation, that the college should encourage participation even to the point of picking up the expenses.

Program advisory committees exist in most community colleges and for most career/vocational programs. However, once past the initial start up activities of the program, it's often hard to keep a program's advisory committee active and productive. A major contribution that advisory committees can make, is in the area of staying current. Business persons are typically at the forefront of new technolgoy and means of improving their efficiency. They can serve as barometers and forecasters of training needs and expectations in the future. Often, they are not conditioned to think of training manpower needs in their planning, however, with good program advisory participation, manpower training needs can become a part of the planning of both the business person and the college. Trustees can certainly help in the program advisory process by encouraging friends and associates to parti-

cipate on committees, by asking for regular reports from the college president on the activities of the advisory committees, and by nurturing and stating the college's commitment to currency.

There needs to be an on-going needs assessment for vocational training. These studies may be one year or several years in length and provide a means of planning for educational training programs. The trustee needs to be aware that this process is indeed in place and that the information gained is a part of college planning.

Another major source of information leading to responsiveness to the community is staff participation on industrial development corporations. Most communities are seeking industrial development. College staff should participate as members of the industrial development corporation, and also as part of the search teams for new industry. The influence of trustees with various community leaders may assist in placing college staff members in responsible voluntary roles in the industrial development groups.

Another method of promoting responsiveness to community needs is to have an open agenda item at each board meeting for discussion of what's happening in the community and what are some of the educational and service needs that are being identified. Often a trustee's comment or insight at such a meeting can provide direction for the college staff to seek out further information and make recommendations on responding to the community need.

The above processes are informal; however, if done well, and if done with a commitment, they can provide good inside information on the needs of the community, for indeed the college is part of the community through this process.

There are two further areas which I would like to describe that contribute to college currency. The first is the process of accountability and the second is curriculum viability studies.

Accountability studies can be self-assessments on the part of trustees as to the extent that the college is meeting its mission and goals. Often staff can provide information needed for trustees to make this assessment. However, I feel that it is important that trustees set aside a certain amount of time to conduct accountability studies. The accountability study provides answers to the question of how well the institution is meeting its mission and goals.

The second, and more formal process, is curriculum viability studies. For instance, at Valencia the staff is now conducting studies on eight career programs which have been identified as risky or very risky based upon program criteria. Program criteria include such things as placement rates, which describes the number of graduates of the program who are placed in field in which they are trained, retention rates, and costs. This is an annual process and helps insure that each career program, based upon these criteria, will be examined. Programs failing to meet three or more of the four criteria, are reviewed for continuation. Programs failing to meet two of the criteria are reviewed for revision. The reviews take place by task forces of faculty and administrators to make recommendations directly to the president. It is hoped that this process will help insure that curriculum sacred cows are carefully dealt with and that the college does not spend its resources on programs that are no longer meeting the needs of the community.

Challenges

In summary, "I'm too busy/I can't do it" is a

germ we want to avoid. In fact as a trustee, I'm glad to hear that our college staff is too busy. But I hope that I will never hear that it's too busy and *it can't do it*. If we ever take that stance, we lose our capability of staying abreast of community needs and staying current in our programs to meet community needs.

So now for some parting challenges:

1. Stay busy as trustees, stay real busy, but don't become a "can't do it."

2. As a second challenge, let's commit ourselves to support our presidents and provide direction for them to be community involved and community oriented. Let's be a model for that behavior by civic involvement ourselves.

3. Let's support on-going college viability and accountability studies to ensure that our existing programs, which are often the too busy part of our lives, do not keep us from being responsive.

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